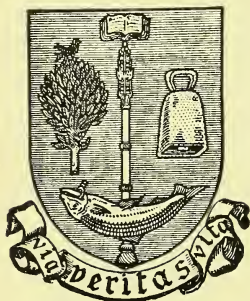




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THE
DANGER
OF
Premature Interment.

Plummer and Brewis, Printers,
Love-Lane, Eastcheap.





H. Corbould del.

Hopwood sc.

*The body of Tullia, the daughter of
Cicero, discovered entire and uncorrupted, in
a Sepulchre, 1500 Years after Burial!*

Vide Page 127

Published by W. Simpkin & R. Marshall Dec^r 1815.

THE
DANGER
OF
Premature Interment,

PROVED FROM MANY
REMARKABLE INSTANCES

Of People who have recovered after being laid out for dead,
and of others entombed alive, for want of being
properly examined prior to Interment.

Also a Description of

The Manner the ANCIENT EGYPTIANS, and other NATIONS,
Preserved and venerated their Dead,

And a curious Account of their
SEPULCHRAL EVER BURNING LAMPS
And

Mausoleums.

Likewise the pernicious effects of burying in the body of
Churches, and confined Church Yards pointed out,
whereby many valuable lives have been lost
to the Public, and their Friends.

SELECTED FROM HISTORICAL RECORDS.



BY

JOSEPH TAYLOR.



*"To revive nailed up in a Coffin! A return of Life in Darkness,
Distraction, and Despair! The Brain can scarce sustain the
reflection, in our coolest moments"*

LONDON:

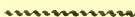
PRINTED FOR W. SIMPKIN AND R. MARSHALL,
Stationers Court, Ludgate-Street.

1816.

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INTRODUCTION.



AMONGST the many dreadful calamities incident to human nature, none surely is more horrid, nor can the thought be more appalling, than even *in idea* to be buried alive;—the very soul sickens at the thought. Yet terribly frightful as the imagination paints such a dire event, these things have been. Historical record clearly demonstrates the melancholy truth, and many a valuable member of society, has, I am fully persuaded, times past,

been prematurely consigned to the grave before the vital spark has been extinct. To prevent, if possible, such deplorable events from *ever again* happening, is my principal motive in forming the present volume. The substance of a motto, I have somewhere seen, several years since, on a silver medal, whereon is prettily displayed the figure of a boy blowing with his mouth at a piece of lighted charcoal nearly extinguished, in hopes of again re-invigorating the flame, has ever since been indelibly impressed on my mind, "Who knows," says the motto, "but *one* spark, may yet remain alive." And I would recommend a similar impression to be deeply fixed on the minds of *every* person, as a *standing criterion* in all doubtful cases between life and death. It is a duty incumbent on ourselves, our friends and relatives, and the community at large, to be thus particular in

such a momentous affair. Who amongst us, give me leave to ask, that has the least pretensions to common humanity, would hesitate for a single moment to perform so generous, though painful a duty, as that of carefully attending to the sad expiring moments of a departing friend? The duty must be reciprocal to every benevolent being, as sooner or later, the dreadful trial must be our own. From a sad mistaken humanity, surrounding friends are sometimes apt to persuade the nearest relatives that nothing more can be done for the dying person, and therefore prevent them from performing those kind offices of closing the eyes, and other marks of attention, which can only be expected from those who are deeply interested. Surely such a bounden duty as this, ought not to be left (as is too often the case) to some wretched mercenary nurse, or greedy hireling? forbid it humanity! I would recommend it to all

surviving relatives, and others, who are interested, and have been attending with the kindest assiduity on the sick, not to desert their post, the moment the nurse has reported the death of her patient, but in this trying hour, if grief has not too much overpowered them, to exert every necessary recollection, to calm their feelings as much as human nature will permit, and if possible, not be persuaded to quit the room too hastily, (unless contagion is apprehended) nor suffer the poor departed friend to be stripped and pulled about, until indubitable signs clearly demonstrate life is no more. Many of the stories in this volume, well attested by regular bred professional gentlemen, of the highest respectability, expatiates largely on this humane, and interesting subject, and I would fain flatter myself, such necessary advice as they impart on so very important a subject, will

cause in future in every family, a more than usual care and examination of their friends in the hour of death, and prior to interment. Were we but to bear in our minds the following animated lines from a celebrated poet, our attention to dying friends would be unremitting.

“ Spirits fly swift (our friend’s) perhaps is
gone

A thousand leagues beyond the sun,
Or twice ten thousand more twice told,
Ere the forsaken clay is cold.

“ And yet, who knows ; the friends we
lov’d,

They may not be so far remov’d ;
Only the veil of flesh between,
May oft glide by us, tho’ unseen.

“ While we (their loss lamenting) say,
They’re out of hearing, far away ;
Guardians to us, perhaps they’re near
Conceal’d in vehicles of air.”

The danger which has arisen from burying in churches, and confined church yards, is so clearly proved by several remarkable instances in the present volume, that I shall say little more on the subject, but refer my readers to those important truths for information. Where it is absolutely necessary, a great number of dead bodies must be deposited in one small piece of ground, I would recommend a plan to be observed, something similar to the following, which I am of opinion, would prevent great confusion and danger, when a new grave is about to be opened. Let burying grounds in future, be divided into regular sections, of sufficient length and breadth, to admit of the largest human body, male or female. Over

each of these divisions, regularly and distinctly mark in numerals from 1 to 100, more or less, according to the size of the ground. Then let the parish clerk, sexton, or some other proper person, keep an alphabetical ruled form, whereon must be regularly entered the day of the month, and year the person died in, christian and sir name of the deceased, parish where they resided, and a space annexed for the number and side of the wall, under which the defunct was buried, in like manner.

REGISTER OF FUNERALS.

Name of the Deceased.	Time of Death.	Of what Parish belonging.	No.	Under what wall buried.
Addison, } Richard. }	1816. January 1.	St. Leonard's } Shoreditch. }	1.	South wall.
Barckley, } Thomas. }	February 18.	St. Vedast, } Foster Lane. }	12.	North wall.

I know not whether any similar plan to the above has ever yet been adopted, if not, I think great waste of ground may be prevented, and impure vapours greatly kept under

By duly attending to this register of death, (if I may be allowed the term) a regular gradation will constantly be attended to: this, will in a great measure prevent danger to the grave-digger, and the surrounding inhabitants. For instance, suppose a body to be laid in the grave under No. 1, a second under No. 2, a third under No. 3, and so on in like manner, until the whole number of spaces in the cemetery is filled up. By the time the last numbered grave is opened, if the burying ground is large, the first body buried under No. 1, will very probably be reduced to ashes, so that there will then be room to begin again in the same progressive manner: and if the body should not be quite dissolved (which can easily be ascertained by a reference to the above register) a few layers of earth and straw must be allowed as a barrier between the first and last corpse interred in the same grave. A little attention to some such method as

this, would I am inclined to think, tend greatly to prevent danger in all confined church yards, preserve very frequently the life of the gravedigger, and render the air more pure and wholesome to the surrounding inhabitants of such doleful places. Another improvement may likewise be introduced, which would greatly tend to disperse all noxious effluvia, and make these dormitories less gloomy and unwholesome, I mean where the ground is sufficiently capacious, to plant it with certain shrubs and flowers. Many of the Eastern Nations are very particular in this respect, and set us a rare example for improvement. In the Great Mogul's dominions, no places afford more delight to travellers, than their burying grounds. Their tombs are either built round, square, or with six or eight corners, and covered over archwise, and the remaining part of the ground is planted with fruit trees, and flowers, just as if they were laying out

and planting an elysium. How preferable must places of this description be to our confined, and too often dirty habitations for the dead.

Respecting the sepulchral Lamps of the Ancients, however some people may be inclined to ridicule and discredit such reports, the descriptions are most certainly too curious and interesting to be omitted in a work of this kind. I have therefore selected from the most respectable documents, those records I conceived applicable to my work and deserving of notice. They are such descriptions, as I think ought to be paid much attention to, for in this age of invention, when chemistry is brought to great perfection, and many modern arts are on investigation, only found to be improvements of the Ancients, as is the case with the Gas-lights which shine so refulgent through our streets, it may probably by

the philosophic experimentalist, at some future period be discovered by what art the Ancients constructed those perpetual lights which have so often been found in their sepulchres. Surely nothing can be too great for imitation. If the Mausoleums of our monarchs, and the tombs of the great could be illuminated, with a durable pale, silvery, phosphoric light, (which I do not conceive at all impracticable) it would render the mansions of the dead less terrific, be awfully grand and sublime, and transmit to posterity the improvements of the age. The idea of a continual light burning in our tombs after our decease, would to many, I am well convinced be so comfortable an anticipation, that the fear of death would be less dreadful, than when we expect, after the dread catastrophe, to remain for years in darkness.

That these, my humble efforts for the

public good, or that any of the subsequent stories may be instrumental in preserving the life of *but one* fellow-creature, or that the hints I have treated so superficially, may induce some abler pen to enlarge on a subject so very important to all mankind, then will my utmost ambition be fully gratified.

J. TAYLOR.

Newington,
Nov. 18th, 1815.

2

THE
DANGER
OF
Premature Interment,
&c. &c.

~~~~~

ARISTOTLE asserted, that it was more just to assist the dead than the living. Plato, in his Republic, does not forget, amongst other parts of justice, that which concerns the dead. Cicero establishes three kinds of justice; the first respects the Gods, the second the *manes*, or dead, and the third men. These principles seem to be drawn from nature, and they appear at least, to be necessary for the support of society, since at all times civilized nations have taken care to bury their dead, and to pay their last respects to them.

We find in history, several traces of the respect which the Indians, the Egyptians, and the Syrians entertained for the dead. The Syrians embalmed their bodies with myrrh, aloes, honey, salt, wax, bitumen, and resinous gums; they dried them also with the smoke of the fir and the pine tree. The Egyptians preserved theirs with the resin of the cedar, with aromatic spices, and with salt. These people often kept such mummies, or at least their effigies, in their houses, and at grand entertainments they were introduced, that by reciting the great actions of their ancestors, they might be better excited to virtue.—How different is this respect for the dead, from that practised at present?

The Greeks, at first, had probably not the same veneration for the dead as the Egyptians. Empedocles, therefore, in the eighty fourth Olympiad, restored to life Ponthia, a woman of Agrigentum, who was about to be interred. But this people, in proportion as they grew civilized, becoming more enlightened, perceived the necessity of establishing laws for the protection of the dead

At Athens, the law required that no person should be interred before the third day; and in the greater part of the cities of Greece, a funeral did not take place till the sixth or seventh. When a man appeared to have breathed his last, his body was generally washed by his nearest relations with warm water mixed with wine. They afterwards anointed it with oil, and covered it with a dress, commonly made of fine linen, according to the custom of the Egyptians. This dress was white at Messina, Athens, and in the greater part of the cities of Greece, where the dead body was crowned with flowers. At Sparta it was of a purple colour, and the body was surrounded with olive leaves. The body was afterwards laid upon a couch in the entry of the house, where it remained till the time of the funeral. At the magnificent obsequies which Alexander honoured Ephestion, the body was not burned till the tenth day.

The Romans in the infancy of their empire, paid as little attention to their dead as the Greeks had done. Acilius Aviola having fallen into a lethargic fit, was supposed to be dead; he was

therefore carried to the funeral pile; the fire was lighted up; and though he cried out that he was still alive, he perished for want of speedy assistance. The Praetor *Lamiae* met with the same fate. *Tubero*, who had been Praetor was also saved from the funeral pile. *Asclepiades* a physician, who lived in the time of *Pompey the Great*, about one hundred and twenty years before the Christian æra, returning from his country house, observed near the walls of Rome, a grand convoy and a crowd of people, who were in mourning assisting at a funeral, and shewing every exterior sign of the deepest grief. Having asked what was the occasion of this concourse, no one made any reply. He therefore approached the pretended dead body, and imagining that he perceived signs of life in it, he ordered the by-standers to take away the flambeaux, to extinguish the fire, and to pull down the funeral pile. A kind of murmur on this arose throughout the whole company. Some said that they ought to believe the physician, while others turned both him and his profession into ridicule. The relations however yielded at length to the remonstrances of *Asclepiades*;



they consented to defer the obsequies for a little, and the consequence was the restoration of the pretended dead person to life. It appears that these examples, and several others of the like nature, induced the Romans to delay funerals longer, and to enact laws to prevent precipitate interments.

At Rome, after allowing a sufficient time for mourning, the nearest relation generally closed the eyes of the deceased, and the body was bathed with warm water, either to render it fitter for being anointed with oil, or to reanimate the principle of life, which might remain suspended, without manifesting itself. Proofs were afterwards made, to discover whether the person was really dead, which were often repeated during the time that the body remained exposed; for there were persons appointed to visit the dead, and to prove their situation. On the second day, after the body had been washed a second time, it was anointed with oil and balm. Luxury encreased to such a pitch in the choice of foreign perfumes for this purpose, that under the consulship of Licinius Crassus,

and Julius Cæsar, the senate forbad any perfumes to be used, except such as were the production of Italy. On the third day the body was clothed according to its dignity and condition. The robe called the prætexta was put upon magistrates, and a purple robe upon consuls; for conquerors who had merited triumphal honours, this robe was of gold tissue. For other Romans it was white, and black for the lower classes of the people. These dresses were often prepared at a distance, by the mothers and wives of persons still in life. On the fourth day the body was placed on a couch, and exposed in the vestibule of the house, with the visage turned towards the entrance, and the feet near the door; in this situation it remained till the end of the week. Near the couch were lighted wax tapers, a small box in which perfumes were burnt, and a vessel full of water, for purification, with which those who approached the body besprinkled themselves. An old man, belonging to those who furnished every thing necessary for funerals, sat near the deceased, with some domestics clothed in black. On the eighth day the funeral

rites were performed ; but to prevent the body from corrupting before that time, salt, wax, the resinous gum of the cedar, myrrh, honey, balm, gypsum, lime, asphaltes, or bitumen of Judea, and several other substances, were employed. The body was carried to the pile with the face uncovered, unless wounds, or the nature of the disease had rendered it loathsome and disgusting. In such a case, a mask was used made of a kind of plaister, which has given rise to the expression of *funera lavasta*, used in some of the ancient authors. This was the last method of concealment which Nero made use of, after having caused Germanicus to be poisoned : for the effect of the poison had become very sensible by livid spots and the blackness of the body, but a shower of rain happening to fall, it washed the plaister entirely away, and thus the horrid crime of fratricide was discovered.

The Turks have, at all times, been accustomed to wash the bodies of their dead before interment : and as their ablutions are complete, and as no part of the body escapes the

attention of those who assist at such melancholy ceremonies, they can easily perceive whether one be really dead or alive, by examining, among other methods of proof, whether the *sphincter anis* has lost its power of contraction. If this muscle remains still contracted, they warm the body, and endeavour to recal it to life; otherwise, after having washed it with water and soap, they wipe it with linen cloths, wash it again with rose water, and aromatic substances, cover it with a rich dress, put upon its head a cap ornamented with flowers, and extend it upon a carpet, placed in the vestibule, or hall, at the entrance of the house.

The Jews, after having washed the body, and anointed it with aromatic substances of a more or less agreeable odour, according to the rank and riches of the deceased, bind it round afterwards with bandages of linen, and cover the head with a handkerchief.

In the primitive church the dead were washed and then anointed; the body was wrapped up in linen, or clothed in a dress of more or less

value, according to circumstances, and it was not interred till after being exposed, and kept some days in the house. The custom of clothing the dead is preserved in France only for princes and ecclesiastics.

In other countries, more or less care is taken to prevent sudden interments. At Geneva, there are people appointed to inspect all dead bodies. Their duty consists in examining whether the person be really dead, and whether they died naturally, or by violence. In the North, as well as at Genoa, it is usual not to bury the dead till three days have expired. In Holland people carry their precautions much farther, and delay the funerals longer. In Spain, the dead are generally clothed in the dresses of the religious. And in Germany they are dressed in clothes more or less splendid, with their faces uncovered, and are generally laid in that apartment, which is nearest the door.

In England, the poorest people keep their dead four or five days, and sometimes longer.

and the nearest relations are invited to see them exposed. If they happen to be buried sooner, this precipitation excites suspicions among the neighbours, who never fail to address themselves to the magistrates, and to take the body from the grave, that they may examine whether it bears any traces of violence.

It is not only in Europe that precautions are taken against precipitate burials. In Asia, when an inhabitant of the kingdom of Boutain dies, the body is kept in the house three days all of which are spent in singing and prayers.

If we instead of following the example of those people, have forgotten that respect which the ancients entertained for the dead, it is owing to the prejudices of our education imbibed in infancy. In that early age nurses and ignorant servants instil into children those absurdities which they themselves have adopted, and such prejudices are the most difficult to be overcome. Scarcely has one ceased to live, when he becomes an object of horror.

The body is abandoned to a set of mercenary people, who begin by dragging it from a warm bed to place it on some cold straw. Soon after devotion, or the desire of gain, draws together the undertakers, who first cover the head and face with a kind of cap, in the shape of a bag. Sometimes they put cotton into the mouth, the ears, and even into the fundament, if the last precaution has not been taken before their arrival. This cotton is placed there to prevent the body from staining the linen in which it is wrapped up. They then bind the breast and arms round with a bandage, and make another pass round the lower part of the belly; the latter comprehends the arms from the elbows, and serves also to enclose the feet: after this the undertakers wrap up the whole body in a sheet, which they fix at both the extremities, and either sew or fasten it with pins, observing always to confine the body as closely as they can. It is thus that a man is prepared for his coffin; but it would be difficult to pursue a more pernicious method, even if one had an intention of accelerating death, or of rendering it impossible for a person to return to life.



The cold to which a dying man is exposed, that he may not dirty himself, is attended with the greatest danger, for while the sphincter remains in contraction, there exists within us some remains of irritability, and consequently of life. The discharge of the intestinal matter, is the *Ultimum vitæ*. Thus whilst a child has not yet voided the meconium, the man midwife, notwithstanding the most dismal symptoms, still hopes to recal it to life. On the contrary, the appearance of this excrement, is considered by him as a certain sign of death. The stopping of the anus, is attended with no less inconvenience, as it prevents the action of the parts in which life still subsists; for the *Abbé Spalanzani* has proved, that digestion continues for some time after a persons death. If these parts could afterwards recover force, and irritability enough to reanimate the other organs, the closing the anus would necessarily become an obstacle to their salutary action. The different situations given to a body, is sufficient when it has arrived at the last degree of weakness, to cause or to accelerate death. Of this, however, people are not sufficiently aware, when they take away the



pillow from a dying person, which is after done, and place the body upon a straw matrass. Besides, during life, there exhales continually from the cavities of the head, from the breast, and from the belly, a vapour, which is always absorbed by the vessels; but if this vapour be condensed by the cold, it thickens into drops as may be seen by breathing upon a glass, and then an expansion takes place, which interrupts the action of the vessels, and opposes the return of life. Humanity protests against such a detestable mode of procedure; it tells us that we ought to allow sick people to expire in a good warm bed, and to remove all those causes which may shorten the period of their lives.

People are buried sometimes five or six hours after their apparent death, yet how many examples have we seen of the principle of life existing a long time after the motion of the heart and arteries has ceased. We know that the heart generally weakens by degrees, that its power ends by not being any longer in a condition to force the blood into the arteries, that this blood flows towards the large vesse and that the

circulation ceases; but if the tonic motion still subsists, the circulation may be re-established, and it is above all in the exterior part of the body, that it may be put in play to act upon the blood. Being therefore excited by frictions upon the skin, and by insufflation into the intestines, according to the practice of the Acadians, it has often brought to life people taken from the water, who to all appearance were dead. But when the body is buried, the exterior parts are cold, and in a state of compression; besides it is not sufficient that this tonic motion should be excited: one must also remove those obstacles which prevent it from spreading, and giving play to the organs of the pulse, and of respiration; but the pressure made upon the breast and upon the belly, while the mouth is shut, and sometimes stuffed with cotton, becomes an object almost insurmountable. The pressure upon the belly is attended with this great disadvantage, that it opposes the sinking of the diaphragm, thus preventing respiration, and besides compressing the intestines, which are generally the last part in which the vital principle subsists. It results then from

this precipitate custom, either that the remains of life are sometimes extinguished, or that they are oppressed for a time, so that no one never revives, but amidst the horrors of the grave.

The difference between the end of a weak life, and the commencement of death, is so small, and the uncertainty of the signs of the latter is so well established, both by ancient and modern authors, who have turned their attention to that important object, that we can scarcely suppose undertakers capable of distinguishing an apparent from a real death. Animals which sleep during winter, shew no signs of life; in this case, circulation is only suspended; but were it annihilated, the vital spark does not so easily lose its action, as the other fluids of the body: and the principle of life, which long survives the appearance of death, may re-animate a body, in which the action of all the organs seem to be at an end. But how difficult is it to determine, whether this principle may not be revived? It has been found impossible to recal to life some animals suffocated by

mephitic vapours, though they appeared less affected than others who have revived. Coldness, heaviness of the body, a leaden livid colour, with a yellowness in the visage, are all very uncertain signs. Mr. Zimmerman observed them all upon the body of a criminal, who fainted through the dread of that punishment which he had merited. He was shaken, dragged about, and turned in the same manner as dead bodies without the least signs of resistance, and yet at the end of twenty four hours, he was recalled to life by means of volatile alkali.

It is certain that life, when to all appearance lost, may often, by due care, be restored. Accidents frequently prove fatal, merely because proper means are not used to counteract their effects. No person ought to be looked upon as killed by any accident, unless where the structure of the heart, brain, or some organ necessary to life, is evidently destroyed. The action of these organs may be so far impaired, as even to be for some time imperceptible, when life is by no means gone. In this case, however, if the fluids be suffered to grow cold, it

will be impossible to put them again in motion, even though the solids should recover their power of acting. Thus, when the motion of the lungs has been stopped by unwholesome vapour, the action of the heart by a stroke on the breast, or the functions of the brain by a blow on the head, if the person be suffered to grow cold, he will in all probability continue so; but, if the body be kept warm, as soon as the injured part has recovered its power of acting, the fluids will again begin to move, and all the vital functions will be restored.

It is a horrid custom, immediately to consign over to death every person who has the misfortune, by a fall, a blow, or the like, to be deprived of the appearance of life. The unhappy person, instead of being carried into a warm house, and laid by the fire, or put to a warm bed, is generally hurried away to church, or a barn, or some other cold damp house, where, after a fruitless attempt has been made to bleed him, perhaps by one who knew nothing of the matter, he is given over for dead, and no further notice taken of him. This conduct seems to be the result of ignorance, supported

by an ancient superstitious notion, which forbids the body of any person killed by accident to be laid in an house that is inhabited. What the ground of this superstition may be, we shall not pretend to inquire ; but surely the conduct founded upon it, is contrary to all the principles of reason, humanity, and common sense.

When a person seems to be suddenly deprived of life, our first business is to inquire into the cause. We ought carefully to observe whether any substance be lodged in the wind-pipe or gullet ; and, if that is the case, attempts must be made to remove it. When unwholesome air is the cause, the patient ought immediately to be removed out of it. If the circulation be suddenly stopped, from any cause whatever, except mere weakness, the patient should be bled. If the blood does not flow, he may be immersed in warm water, or rubbed with warm cloths, &c. to promote the circulation. When the cause cannot be suddenly removed, our great aim should be to keep up the vital warmth by rubbing the patient with hot cloths, or salt, and covering his body with warm sand, ashes, or the like.

REMARKABLE  
INSTANCES

OF

*People who have been nearly buried alive, but  
recovered by resuscitative application.*



I.

A DIRECTOR of the coach office at Dijon, named Colinet, was supposed to be dead, and the news of this event was spread throughout the whole city. One of his friends, who was desirous of seeing him at the moment when he was about to be buried, having looked at him for a considerable time, thought he perceived some remains of sensibility in the muscles of the face. He therefore made an attempt to bring him to life by spirituous liquors, in which he succeeded; and this director enjoyed afterwards, for a long time, that life which he owed to his



friend. This remarkable circumstance was much like those of Empedocles and Asclepiades. These instances would perhaps be more frequent, were men of skill and abilities called in cases of sudden death, in which people of ordinary knowledge are often deceived by false appearances.

A man may fall into a syncope, and may remain in that condition three, or even eight days. People in this situation have been known to come to life when deposited among the dead.



## II.

A BOY belonging to the Hospital at Cassel, appeared to have breathed his last: he was carried into the hall where the dead were exposed, and was wrapped up in a piece of canvas. Some time after, recovering from his lethargy, he recollected the place in which he had been deposited, and crawling towards the door, knocked against it with his foot. This



noise was luckily heard by the centinel, who soon perceiving the motion of the canvas, called for assistance. The youth was immediately conveyed to a warm bed, and soon perfectly recovered. Had his body been confined by close bandages, or ligatures, he would not have been able, in all probability, to make himself be heard: his unavailing efforts would have made him again fall into a syncope, and he would have been thus buried alive.



### III.

WE must not be astonished, that the servants of an hospital should take a syncope for a real death, since even the most enlightened people have fallen into errors of the same kind. Dr. John Schmid relates, that a young girl, seven years of age, after being afflicted for some weeks with a violent cough, was all of a sudden freed from this troublesome malady, and appeared to be in perfect health. But some days after, while playing with her companions, this

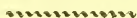
child fell down in an instant, as if struck by lightning. A death-like paleness was diffused over her face and arms; she had no apparent pulse; her temples were sunk, and she shewed no signs of sensation when shaken or pinched. A physician, who was called, and who believed her to be dead, in compliance with the repeated and pressing request of her parents, attempted, though without any hopes, to recal her to life, and at length, after several vain efforts, he made the soles of her feet be smartly rubbed with a brush, dipped in strong pickle. At the end of three quarters of an hour, she was observed to sigh; she was then made to swallow some spirituous liquor, and she was soon after restored to life, much to the joy of her disconsolate parents.



#### IV.

A CERTAIN man having undertaken a journey, in order to see his brother, on his arrival at his house, found him dead. This news

affected him so much, that it brought on a most dreadful syncope, and he himself was supposed to be in the like situation. After the usual means had been employed to recal him to life, it was agreed that his body should be dissected, to discover the cause of so sudden a death; but the supposed dead person over-hearing this proposal, opened his eyes, started up, and immediately betook himself to his heels.



## V,

CARDINAL ESPINOLA, prime minister to Philip II. was not so fortunate, for we read in the memoirs of Amelot de la Houssai, that he put his hand to the knife with which he was opened, in order to be embalmed. In short, almost every one knows, that Vesalius, the father of anatomy, having been sent for to open a woman, subject to hysterics, who was supposed to be dead, he perceived, on making the first incision, by her motions, and cries, that she was still alive; that this circumstance

rendered him so odious, that he was obliged to fly, and that he was so much affected by it, that he died soon after.



## VI.

ON this occasion, we cannot forbear to add an event more recent, but no less melancholy. The Abbé Prevost, so well known by his writings, and the singularities of his life, was seized with a fit of the apoplexy, in the forest of Chantilly, on the 23rd of October, 1763. His body was carried to the nearest village, and the officers of justice were proceeding to open it, when a cry which he sent forth affrightened all the assistants, and convinced the surgeon that the Abbé was not dead; but it was too late to save him, as he had already received the mortal wound.

## VII.

IN the civil wars of France, on account of religious disputes, when the Catholics besieged Rouen, in 1562, Francis Civile, one of the most intrepid gentlemen of the Calvinist party, received a wound which made him fall senseless from the rampart into the town. Some soldiers, who supposed him dead, stripped and buried him, with the usual negligence on those occasions. A trusty and affectionate person he had retained in his service, desirous of procuring for his master a more honourable burial, went with design to find his body. His search being fruitless amongst several dead bodies which were quite disfigured, he covered them again with earth, but so as that the hand of one of them remained uncovered. As he was returning, he looked behind him, and perceived that hand above the ground, and the apprehension he was under, that such an object might excite the dogs to unearth the dead body for devouring it, induced him to come back in order to cover it. The moment he was going to exercise this pious

office, a gleam of light from the moon, just coming from under a cloud, made him perceive a diamond ring Civile wore on his finger. Without loss of time he takes up his master, who had still breath in him, and carries him to the hospital for the wounded, but the surgeon, who had been quite fatigued with labour, and who considered him as on the point of death, would take no trouble about dressing his wounds. The servant then found himself obliged to convey him to his own inn, where he languished four days without any help. At the end of this time two physicians were found who had the humanity to visit him. They cleansed his wounds, and by their care and attention put him in a way to live, and at length, to the astonishment of every one, he finally recovered.

But the misfortunes of this hero had not yet ended. The town having been taken by assault, the conquerors were so barbarous as to throw him out of a window. He fortunately fell on a heap of dung, where, abandoned by every one, he passed three days, until his

relation Ducroiset had him carried off privately in the night, and sent to a house up the country, where his wounds were dressed as opportunity offered. There, after so many disasters, he recovered so perfect a state of health, that he survived forty years after all these accidents. That particular providence, which had saved this man from so many perils, also presided over his birth. His mother dying with child, during the absence of her husband, had been buried, without any one thinking to extract the child, by the Cæsarian operation, when fortunately the day after she was interred, the husband arrived, and learnt with surprise the death of his wife, and the little attention that was paid to the fruit of her womb. He instantly required her grave to be dug up, and having had his unfortunate wife opened, Civile was extracted while living.

## VIII.

*Sir Hugh Ackland, after being laid out as a corpse, recovered by a bumper of brandy.*

THE late Sir Hugh Ackland, of Devonshire, apparently died of a fever, and was laid out as dead: the nurse, with two of the footmen, sat up with the corpse. Lady Ackland, sent them a bottle of brandy to drink in the night: one of the servants being an arch rogue, told the other that his master dearly loved brandy when he was alive, and, says he, I am resolved he shall drink one glass, with us now he is dead. The fellow accordingly poured out a bumper of brandy, and forced it down his throat: a gurgling immediately ensued, and a violent motion of the neck, and upper part of the breast. The other footman and the nurse were so terrified, that they ran down stairs; and the brandy genius hastening away with rather too much speed, tumbled down stairs head-foremost. The noise of the fall, and his cries, alarmed a young gentleman that slept in the house that night,



who got up, and went to the room where the corpse lay, and, to his great surprise, saw Sir Hugh sitting upright. He called the servants; Sir Hugh was put into a warm bed, and the physician and apothecary were sent for. These gentlemen in a few weeks perfectly restored their patient to health, and he lived several years after. The above, says the writer, is well known to the people in Devonshire, as in most companies Sir Hugh used to tell this strange circumstance, and talk of his resurrection by his brandy footman, to whom, when he really died, he left a handsome annuity.



## IX.

*Sir Gervase Scroop.*

IN Edge-hill fight, Sir Gervase Scroop, fighting valiantly for his king, received twenty-six wounds, and was left on the ground amongst the dead: next day, his son Adrian obtained leave of the king, to find and fetch off his

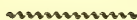
father's corpse, and his hopes pretended no higher than a decent interment thereof: such a search was thought in vain amongst so many naked bodies with wounds disguised from themselves, and where pale death had confounded all complexions together. However, he having some general hint of the place, where his father fell, did light upon his body, which had some warmth left therein: the heat was with rubbing within a few moments improved to motion, that motion within some hours into sense, that sense within a day into speech: within certain weeks he arrived to a perfect recovery, living more than ten years after, a monument of God's mercy and his son's affection. The effect of this story (says Dr. Fuller) I received from his own mouth in Lincoln College.



## X.

“WE know some,” saith Alexander Benedictus, “who have been laid in their graves half alive; and some noble persons have been

disposed in their sepulchres, whose life has lain hid in the secret repositories of the heart. One great lady was thus entombed, who was after found dead indeed; but sitting, and removed from her place, as one that had returned to life amongst the carcases of the dead. She had pulled off the hair from her head, and had torn her breast with her nails, signs too apparent of what had passed; and that she had long in vain called for help, while alone in the society of the dead."



## XI.

*Monsieur Mercier, in his Tableau de Paris, relates the following extraordinary Fact.*

ABOUT seventeen years ago (i. e. 1765) an innocent young country girl, of handsome and engaging person, was hired as a servant by a man \* at Paris, who was unfortunately for her

\* Note—Celibacy in men was very common in France before the Revolution, and it was there no disparagement

contaminated with almost every vice incident to human nature. This wretch was so struck with her beauty, that he left no means untried to seduce her ; but she was innately virtuous, and resisted all his wicked attempts. Being a stranger at Paris, and without any friend to receive her, she dreaded to quit the house of her persecutor, and with equal reluctance continued. At length her virtuous resistance so inflamed this wretched being, that not being able to gratify his desires in the manner he wished, he formed the most diabolical plan of vengeance that ever entered the human mind. He privately conveyed a quantity of plate, marked with his name, into the box where the girl kept her clothes, and then declaring he had been robbed, sent for an officer of Police, had her taken into custody, and made his report to the magistrate of the things that were missing. The officer on opening her box, and finding the articles supposed to be stolen, communicated the information to the magistrate, who, being fully persuaded of her guilt, committed to a girl's character to have lived in the house of a bachelor as servant.

mitted her to prison. Here she fell on her knees, and supplicated the monster, but in vain; her tears were the only proof of her innocence, in opposition to the apparent fact, laid to her charge, which appeared to be incontrovertible. She was shortly after brought to trial, where, with the aid of the master's circumstantial evidence, she was found guilty, ordered for execution, and in short was hanged. But mark the secret workings of Providence in behalf of an innocent victim! The executioner was a novice in his profession, and in adjusting the rope round the neck of this poor creature, he fastened it so awkwardly, that respiration was not entirely stopped. After hanging the usual time, the body was cut down, and sold to a Surgeon, (formerly in France, the bodies of criminals after execution, were a part of the hangman's perquisites, who had liberty to dispose of them as he thought proper) who ordered it to be removed to his house for dissection. In the evening, when about to commence the operation, he thought he discovered an unusual warmth in several parts of the body. On holding a glass close to her mouth, he per-

ceived a dulness and humidity on its surface, which led him to conclude, that the action of the lungs had not entirely ceased. The almost fatal knife immediately fell from his hand, and with great humanity he had the body put in a warm bed, where, after applying the usual remedies in cases of suspended animation, he had the satisfaction to find his efforts effectual, in restoring to life this unfortunate innocent. The Surgeon then sent for a Priest, to whom he was known, and in whose prudence and secrecy he could confide, and after telling him the particulars of this strange affair, requested him to be witness of his conduct, and to further aid him with his advice. When this poor unfortunate creature opened her eyes, and beheld the priest standing near her, she believed herself in the regions of the blest, clasping her trembling hands together, she exclaimed,—“Eternal and heavenly Father, you know my innocence!—Have mercy on me!”—Nothing could be more moving and expressive than the supplications of this much injured girl, who being roused from a death-like state, fancied herself in the presence of the Supreme Judge,

and, in fact, could hardly be prevailed upon to desist from her invocations to the priest as to the Almighty : and so strongly was the idea of her late dreadful sufferings impressed upon her, that it was with much difficulty she could be persuaded she was again an inhabitant of the earth.



## XII.

### *Remarkable Resuscitation in Sweden.*

ON the 23rd of March, 1756, a peasant, about sixty years of age, of the province of Scheeren, in Sweden, having been made very drunk with brandy, was, in his way home, thrown down by the violence of the wind : and as he was too far gone in liquor to recover his legs again, he soon fell asleep where he lay. Not being discovered till the next morning, he was found then frozen stiff, and taken up for dead. He was put into a shell in order for interment, when fortunately Mr. Nauder, a



physician of the province of Gothland, being on a journey, arrived on the spot where the accident happened. He examined the body; the face, and all the extremities, were cold as ice, and the cheeks of an extraordinary red colour. The joints were immoveable, the eyes were fixed. Not the least motion of the heart or pulse, or the smallest signs of respiration were left; and the feet were so completely frozen, that the toes were all become black, except the great toe on the right foot. After some time contemplating on these unfavourable circumstances, Mr. Nauder imagined he could perceive some warmth at the pit of the stomach, which encouraged him to hope the poor object might be recovered; but there being no Apothecary, or medicines of any kind to be had in the place, he was induced to try the following methods. He begun, by ordering the arms, legs, and loins of the patient, to be rubbed with coarse woollen cloths. He put on the stomach and belly warm cloths of the same kind, which were frequently changed, increasing their warmth by degrees. At the same time, the patient was laid on a mattrass on the floor; no care being as

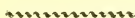


yet taken about his feet, which the physician supposed it was impossible to save. On reflecting afterwards, however, on the custom of putting frozen meat into cold water, in order to thaw it, without prejudice, he had a mind to try the same expedient. But, as the joints were as yet inflexible, he could not find means to immerse the feet in water, so was obliged to content himself with ordering wet linen cloths, frequently changed, to be wrapped round them.

By these means, the region of the heart began to recover warmth, but not till after four hours constant rubbing, there was the least appearance of respiration. This was about two o'clock in the afternoon. No pulse, however, was to be perceived till near half an hour after three, when the muscles began to lose their rigidity; the cheeks relaxed, and before five, a silver spoon might be got between his teeth. At this time they strove to make him swallow some hot wine, which with much difficulty was effected: after which, his face was covered with sweat, and his cheeks began to return to their natural colour. Soon afterwards he began to

move his eye-brows, and at six o'clock his arms and hands. He was now placed in his bed, before a good fire; his arms, and legs being well covered with warm blankets. He took also two more spoonfuls of hot wine; and, about eight o'clock, began first to talk, but in a manner very confused and unintelligible; being delirious, and fancying himself still in the forest. By degrees the cold had almost left his feet, and the blackness of the toes in a great measure disappeared, although the free motion of the joints was not as yet restored. About ten o'clock, however he began to bend his back, and complained of a violent pain in his legs. He now took a little beer made hot, with an egg beat in it, and soon after went to sleep. In the morning, his feet were warm, and without pain, and his toes recovered entirely their natural colour, but both were extremely tender. His pulse beat quick and strong, and together with a burning thirst indicated bleeding necessary; but as no lancet could be procured, Mr. Nauder ordered him some water gruel, which he drank of at intervals plentifully, till noon; when he was relieved farther by a stool. He went again

in the evening to sleep, and was the next morning capable of sitting up, and being conveyed home in a carriage, not indeed entirely free from pain, but in a fair way of a perfect and speedy recovery.



### XIII.

*Peter Zacchias, a celebrated physician of Rome, relates the following appropriate story.*

THERE was a young man in the hospital of the Holy Ghost, who being attacked with the plague, from the violence of his distemper fell into so perfect a syncope, as to be imagined dead. His body was placed among those, who, having died of the same malady, were waiting for interment. Whilst these carcasses were transporting across the Tyber in a bark destined for the purpose, the young man exhibited some signs of life, upon which he was immediately carried back to the hospital, where he recovered. Two days afterwards, however

he relapsed into a like syncope, and his body once more numbered with the dead, was again transported across the Tyber for burial. Again, however, he came to himself; new cares were bestowed upon him, and the assistance of suitable remedies, not only completely restored him to life, but even cured him so completely, that he lived for many years afterwards."



#### XIV.

##### *A young Lady, buried alive in Russia.*

HASTY interment is still a prevalent custom in Russia, and even premature burials are said to be not quite unknown. A short time ago the following horrid circumstance happened at St. Petersburg.

A young nobleman, who had squandered away his fortune, found his sister, to whom he applied for assistance, not the least inclined to sacrifice her patrimony to his taste for dissipa-

tion. As he considered himself her heir, the wicked thought arose in his breast, to make himself master of her fortune. With this view, he found means to give the unfortunate lady a sleeping draught. She was now considered as dead, and with every appearance of the deepest sorrow, her interment was resolved upon. The corpse was already placed before the altar, when one of her friends happening to pass through the place, was informed of her sudden death. She hurried to the church, where the priest was already pronouncing the blessing over the corpse; and in order to impress the last farewell kiss on the lips of her late dearly beloved friend, she hastened to the coffin. She seized her hand, and found it rather flaccid, but not stiff. She touched her cheek, and imagined she felt some natural warmth in it. She insisted on stopping the ceremony, and trying whether her friend might not be recalled to life. But all was in vain; neither the brother nor the priest, would listen to her solicitations: on the contrary, they ridiculed her as a person out of her mind. Unfortunately, she no where found assistance. She immediately, in her anx-

ity, threw herself into her carriage, and hastened to the neighbouring seat of government. Here she found a hearing; proper persons accompanied her to investigate the affair, and she drove back with speed, but found her friend already covered with sacred earth. The interment had taken place the day before, and the inhuman brother had already obtained possession of her property; while priests and witnesses attested that the unfortunate person was actually dead. Among the Russians, it is reckoned to be a heinous sin to dig up a corpse; and thus the desire of the generous friend, for a long time experienced the most violent opposition, to convince herself of the truth by ocular demonstration; till at last the commission of inquiry conceived some suspicion, and insisted on opening the grave, when the poor unfortunate lady was discovered to have been buried alive, as her face was much lacerated, and the impression of her nails in the coffin lid. The brother and the priest were immediately taken into custody, confessed their crime, and underwent the punishment they so justly deserved.

## XV.

*Remarkable Trance experienced by the Honourable Mrs. Godfrey, sister to the Great Duke of Marlborough.*

THIS lady had been a long time ill in consequence of the recent death of her brother the Duke, but one Sunday fancying herself better than she had been for some time, and able to go to chapel; as she was dressing for that purpose, she suddenly fell down to all appearance dead.

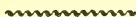
The screams of her woman, and a female friend, brought Colonel Godfrey into the room; who, having probably seen instances of persons remaining in a state of insensibility for a considerable time, and afterwards recovering, directed that his lady should be immediately put to bed, and that two persons should constantly continue with her, till indubitable symptoms appeared of her decease

The consequences proved with how much judgment the Colonel had acted. Notwithstanding the opinion of the physicians, who all declared that the breath of life was irrecoverably departed; and in opposition to the solicitations of his friends to have the body interred, he continued resolute in his determination to the contrary till the Sunday following; when, exactly at the same hour on which the change had happened, signs appeared of returning sensibility. So punctual was nature in her operations upon this singular occasion, that Mrs. Godfrey awoke from her trance just as the chapel bell was once more ringing; which so perfectly eradicated from her memory every trace of her insensibility, that she blamed her attendants for not awaking her in time to go to church, as she had proposed to do.

Colonel Godfrey, whose tenderness to his lady was unremitted, taking advantage of this incident, prudently gave orders, that she should by no means be made acquainted with what had happened, lest it should make a melancholy impression on her mind. and it is supposed,



that to the day of her death, she remained ignorant of the transaction.



## XVI.

*Remarkable particulars of the death of Dr. Walker, of Dublin, from the life of Mrs. Bellamy.*

UPON our arrival at Dublin (says this lady) my mother and myself were very kindly received by an old acquaintance of hers, the lady of the well known Doctor Walker. This gentleman at that time, was esteemed so eminent in his profession, that he was accumulating by his practice a capital fortune, notwithstanding he lived in a very genteel stile. The Doctor was then writing a treatise against the Irish custom of burying the dead within a few hours after their decease. He endeavoured therein to dissuade the Hibernians from pursuing so hazardous a mode, as by interring bodies before any symptoms of putrefaction appeared, it did not

unfrequently happen, that those who might have recovered their vital powers, were prevented from doing so.

When my mother heard on what subject the Doctor was writing, she related to him the story of Mrs. Godfrey (i. e. the preceding one in this book,) and as soon as she had concluded it, to shew the Doctor, how consonant her opinion on this point, was to his own; she promised him, that if she was in the same kingdom with him when the king of terrors made his approach, she would carefully attend to the state of his corpse, and take care that it should not be entombed whilst there was the least probability of its restoration to life.

In a subsequent letter, she resumes the subject, and concludes it with the following melancholy narrative.

In the afternoon I sent my servant, to enquire after our good friend Doctor Walker, who was ill of a fever. About seven she returned with a countenance expressive of horror, and inform-

ed us that the poor Doctor had died during the last night, and that they were already going to bury him. And added, that as they were about to shroud the body, the orifices which had been made in his arms, on bleeding him before his decease, had bled afresh.

As it was now so late in the evening, and the house we had lately removed to, being full two miles from the Doctor's residence, my mother confined with the rheumatism, and myself much indisposed, rendered it impossible for either of us to reach the place of his abode, time enough to prevent his premature interment; which, but for these reasons, we certainly should have done. We likewise found that Mrs. Walker, had been prevailed on by the earnest entreatise of her sister, to leave the house, and retire with her to Dunleary. My mother, therefore, ordered the servant to take a coach, and, if the corpse was interred, to have it taken up at all events, cost what it would.

You can give the common people of Ireland no greater treat than a Wake. Our maid con-

sequently had many companions before she reached the house, especially as she made no secret of her errand. When they arrived, they learned that the body had been interred immediately after her departure, lest the disorder he died of, which was thought to be epidemic, should prove contagious. They were further informed, that as Mrs. Walker was of the sect of Anabaptists, it had been deposited, by her order, in their burying ground, which was situated at the extremity of the city.

The people who accompanied our servant, having come out with an intention of spending the night in their favourite amusement, now resolved to seek the sexton, and carry my mother's commands into execution: but as it was late, and they could not find his house, they clambered over the gate, and thus entered the receptacle for the dead; and whilst they sat round the grave, my servant heard, or thought she heard, a groan, which made them expect, with great impatience, the return of day light.

As soon as Aurora made her appearance,

some labourers, who had just come to their work, acquainted them where the sexton lived, and he was prevailed on, though not without some difficulty, to comply with their request. Accordingly, the canonized bones of the doctor, which had a few hours before been hearsed in death, revisited the glimpse of morn. Upon opening the coffin, (I shudder whilst I relate the horrid scene) they found the body now totally deprived of life, but observed, that the late inhabitant of it had endeavoured to burst his cearments, and leave the dreadful mansion in which he was confined. He had actually turned upon his side; and, as my servant had reported, his arms bled afresh. The coffin was carried to the house of the Sexton, where multitudes, excited by curiosity, flocked from all parts, to see this memorable instance of fruitless precaution. The family, however, hearing of the circumstances, the body was ordered to be re-interred, and the affair was hushed up.

Are you casuist enough to tell me, how it happens that we are generally disappointed in the grand expectations of our lives, and find

our favourite wishes crossed? Never was there a more singular confirmation of this fact, than in the case of the Doctor. The fear of being buried alive, seems to have engrossed all his thoughts. The apprehensions which arose in his mind, both on his own account, and that of others, furnished him an inexhaustible fund for conversation, and gave frequent employment to his pen. The presentiment which had taken possession of him, was not to be suppressed. But, alas! how unavailing, from a combination of preventive circumstances, did it prove!—Let it serve as a document to us, not to fix our hearts with too much anxiety on any object that lies within the reach of the accidents of life, or to indulge too great apprehensions of any dreaded evils.

I was greatly affected at the melancholy accident which had just happened; but my mother was almost distracted at being obliged to break a promise she had so solemnly made, and which would have proved so consonant to the wishes of her old friend.

I have often wondered that humanity, exclusive of affection, does not prevent those, who have a regard for persons during their lives, from leaving them in their last moments, through a false tenderness, to the care of nurses and servants, who are usually insensible to every claim but those of their own ease or interest. Too susceptible of pain, from beholding the expiring pangs of a beloved object, they hasten from it; whereas, that ought to be the strongest motive for their stay, as these would stimulate them to unremitted assiduity in administering every needful assistance whilst life remains, and to a due attention to the body till its interment.



## XVII.

*The following Story is related by a Traveller, who translated the particulars from a foreign monument.*

THE heroine of this event was named Retchmuth Adoleh. She was the wife of a mer-

chant of Cologne, and is said to have died of the plague, which destroyed the greatest part of that city in 1571. She was speedily interred, and a ring of great value was suffered to remain on her finger, which tempted the cupidity of the grave-digger. The night was the time he had planned for the plunder. On going to the grave, opening the same, and attempting to take the ring from off the finger of the lady, she came to herself, and so terrified the sacrilegious thief, that he scampered away with speed, and left his lanthorn behind him. The lady took advantage of his fright, and, with the assistance of the lanthorn, found her way home, and lived afterwards to be the mother of three children. After her real decease, she was buried near the door of the same church, and a tomb was erected over her sepulchre, from whence this record is taken.



## XVIII.

*The following account of reanimation is extracted from the first volume of the Causes Célebres, and was the subject of a serious law suit in Paris.*

Two men in trade, who lived in the street, St. Honoré, in Paris, nearly equal in circumstances, both following the same profession, and united in the closest friendship, had each of them a child, much about the same age. These children were brought up together, and conceived a mutual attachment, which ripening with years into a stronger and more lively sentiment, was approved by the parents on both sides. This young couple was upon the point of being made happy, by a more solid union, when a rich financier, conceiving a passion for the young maiden, unfortunately crossed their inclinations, by demanding her in marriage. The allurements of a more brilliant fortune, seduced her father and mother, notwithstanding their daughter's repugnance to consent to

the change. To their entreaties, however, she was obliged to yield, and sacrificed her affections, by becoming the wife of the financier. Like a woman of virtue, she forbad her earlier lover the house. A fit of melancholy, the consequence of this violence done to her inclinations, by entering into an engagement of interest, brought on her a malady, which so far benumbed her faculties, that she was thought by all her friends to be dead, and was accordingly consigned to the grave. The former lover conceiving, and hoping what he had heard of her death, might only prove a syncope, or fit of lethargy, (as she had been before subject to those complaints) bribed the grave-digger, to convey the body to his house in the night time. He then used every means recommended for restoring suspended animation; and at length was overjoyed at finding his efforts prove effectual.

It is not easy to conceive the surprise the young woman was in on her resuscitation, when she found herself in a strange house, and as it were in the arms of her lover, who informed her

of what had taken place, and the risk he had run on her account. She then comprehended the extent of her obligation to her deliverer, and love, more pathetic than all his persuasions to unite their destinies, determined her, on her recovery to escape with him into England: where they lived for some years in the closest union.

At the end of ten years, they conceived the natural wish of revisiting their own country, and at length returned to Paris, where they took no precaution whatever, of concealing themselves, being persuaded that no suspicion would attend their arrival. It happened however by chance, that the financier met his wife in one of the public walks. The sight of her, made so strong an impression on him, that the persuasion of her death could not efface it. He contrived it so as to join her, and notwithstanding, the language which she used to impose upon him, he left her with the conviction that he was not deceived.

The strangeness of this event, gave more charms to the woman in the eyes of her former husband, than she had for him before. He acted with such address, that he discovered her abode, notwithstanding all her precautions, and reclaimed her with all the regular formalities of justice.

It was in vain that the lover maintained the right which his cares for his mistress gave him to the possession of her: that he represented her inevitable death, but for him: that he ought even to be accused of homicide, for want of having taken proper precautions to assure himself of her death, and a thousand other ingenious reasons which love suggested to him, but without the desired effect. He found that the judicial ear was against him, and not thinking it expedient to wait the result of a definitive judgment, he fled with his mistress into a foreign country, where they passed the remainder of their days, without further molestation.

We have before observed that several persons reputed dead, had exhibited signs of life under

the blade of the Anatomist, and had consequently deceived the judgment of the surgeon who regarded them as defunct. Hence it follows, that apparent death often carries with it the exterior characters of real death; that men of the faculty may be deceived, and much more so those who are less instructed; hence it follows likewise that for the good of humanity it is indispensable that a regulation should be adopted, which would save us from the dreadful horrors of so cruel an event.



## XIX.

It is well known what happened to the celebrated Vesabe, successive physician to Charles V. and to Philip II. of Spain, his son. Being persuaded that a Spanish Nobleman whom he attended was really dead, he asked the permission of opening him, which was granted. But he had scarcely plunged the instrument into the body of the unfortunate man, when he remarked some signs of returning life. In

effect, he found, on opening his bosom, the heart still palpitating. The relations of the deceased, informed of the accident, were not satisfied with pursuing him as a murderer; they dragged him, as a man guilty of sacrilege, before the tribunal of the Inquisition.

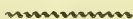
As the fault was notorious, the judges of this tribunal were for condemning him to the punishment attached to the impiety. But fortunately for him, the King of Spain, by his authority and entreaties, delivered him from this certain danger, on condition of his expiating his crime by a voyage to the holy-land. But the unfortunate Vesabe did not long enjoy the pardon which he thus obtained. The Venetian senate having sent for him to fill the place of Falloppe, a violent tempest overtook him on his passage, and cast him on the island of Zante, where after wandering about for several days in the deserts, and suffering all the rigours of hunger, he ended his life deplorably in 1564, at the age of fifty eight.

## XX.

WE are informed in a treatise by Terilli, that a lady of distinction in Spain, being attacked with hysteric suffocations, was regarded as dead. Her relations applied to a celebrated Anatomist to open her, and acquaint himself more particularly with the cause of her death. At the second stroke of his knife she revived, and gave evident signs of life, by the cries that were forced from her by this fatal instrument. The dreadful spectacle excited such astonishment and horror in those present, that this physician, who had hitherto enjoyed the fairest reputation, abhorred now, and detested by every one, was compelled to quit not only the city, where this tragedy was acted, but even the very province itself, in order to withdraw himself from the effects of public indignation.

## XXI.

ACILIUS AVIOLA was (according to Pliny) concluded dead, both by his domestics and physicians; he was accordingly laid out upon the ground for some time, and then carried forth to his funeral pile: but as soon as the flames began to catch his body, he cried out that he was alive, imploring the assistance of his schoolmaster, who was the only person that had tarried by him: but it was too late; for encompassed with flames, he was dead before he could be succoured.



## XXII.

PLATO tells us of Erus Armenius being slain in battle, among many others; when they came to take up the dead bodies upon the tenth day after, they found, that though all the other carcases were putrid, this of his was entire and uncorrupted; they therefore carried it home,



that it might have the just and due funeral rites performed to it. Two days they kept it at home in that state, and on the twelfth day, he was carried out to the funeral pile; and being ready to be laid upon it, he returned to life, to the admiration of all that were present. He declared several strange and prodigious things, which he had seen and known, during all that time that he had remained in the state of the dead.



### XXIII.

ONE of the noble family of the Tatoreidi, being seized with the plague in Burgundy, was supposed to die thereof, and was put into a coffin to be carried to the sepulchres of his ancestor, which were distant from that place some four German miles. Night coming on, the corpse was disposed in a barn, and there attended by some rustics. These perceived a great quantity of fresh blood to drain through the chinks of the coffin; whereupon they open-

ed it, and found that the body was wounded by a nail that was driven into the shoulder through the coffin; and that the wound was much torn by the jogging of the chariot he was carried in; but withal, they discovered that the natural heat had not left his breast. They took him out, and laid him before the fire: he recovered as out of a deep sleep, ignorant of all that had passed. He afterwards married a wife, by whom he had a daughter; married afterwards to Huldericus a Psirt; from his daughter came Sigismundus a Psirt, chief Pastor of St. Mary's Church in Basil.

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#### XXIV.

IN the year 1650 Anne Green was tried at Oxford, before Serjeant Umpton Croke, for the murder of her bastard child, and by him sentenced to be hanged; which sentence was accordingly executed on the fourteenth day of December, in the Castle-Yard, Oxford, where she hung about half an hour, being pulled by

the legs, and, after all, had several strokes given her on the stomach with the butt end of a musket. Being cut down, she was put into a coffin, and carried to a house to be dissected ; where when they opened the coffin, notwithstanding the rope remained fast jammed round her neck, they perceived her breast to rise : whereupon one Mason, a tailor, intending an act of humanity, stamped on her breast and belly ; and one Oran, a soldier, struck her with the butt end of his musket. After all this, when Sir William Patty, Dr. Willis, and Mr. Clarke, came to prepare the body for dissection, they perceived some small rattling in her throat, which induced them to desist from their original design, and began to use means for her recovery ; in which they were so successful, that within fourteen hours she began to speak, and the next day talked and prayed very heartily. Nor did the humanity of the Doctors stop, till by obtaining a pardon for her, they secured that life, which their skill had restored. She was afterwards married, had three children, lived in good repute among her neighbours, at Steeple-Barton, and died in 1659. What was very re-

markable, and distinguished the hand of Providence in her recovery, she was found to be innocent of the crime for which she suffered; and it appeared the child had never been alive, but came from her spontaneously, four months after conception.



## XXV.

IN the year 1658, Elizabeth, the servant of one Mrs. Cope, of Magdalen parish, Oxford, was convicted of killing her bastard child, and was according hanged at Green-ditch, where she hung so long, that one of the by-standers said, if she was not dead, he would be hanged for her. When cut down, the gallows being very high, she fell with such violence to the ground, that seemed sufficient of itself to have killed her. After this, she was put in a coffin, and carried to the George Inn, in Magdalen parish; where signs of life being observed in her, she was blooded, and put to bed to a young woman; by which means she came to

herself, and, to all appearance, might have lived many years: but the next night, she was, by the order of one Mallony, a bailiff of the city, barbarously dragged to Gloucester Green, and there was hanged upon a tree, till she was dead.



## XXVI.

IN the year 1797, a fine boy, about nine years old, son of Mr. Baldock, Surgeon and Apothecary, at Burwash, in Sussex, had the misfortune to fall into a pond of water, about twenty roods from his father's house, wherein he soon sunk to the bottom, and there remained at least a quarter of an hour, before any one went to his assistance. By the time he was taken out, the father had arrived at the spot, where he found his son to all appearance dead, his face having turned quite black, and his pulsation totally left him; he, however, took up the body, and carried it home, losing no time in stripping off the wet cloaths, and getting

it into a warm bed. He next proceeded to wipe the skin quite dry with napkins, and afterwards to rub the body well with hot cloths. Mr. and Mrs. B. continued the stimulating process for a full hour, without the smallest prospect of success; they nevertheless persevered, and soon afterwards had the happiness to discover some small symptoms of returning life, from the emission of a very feeble groan. This encouraged them to redouble their exertions; and though they proved wholly ineffectual for more than another hour; during which time the body appeared as a corpse before them, they did not relax in their efforts; and, at the expiration of two hours and an half, they brought the vital functions into more visible action, which first appeared by a sort of convulsive motion in one hand. The next favourable symptoms discovered, were a little motion in one foot, an inward crying, and a very languid pulse. The return of animation was now more rapid, and apparently very painful; for the poor boy first cried low, and presently after very loud; his eyes, which were naturally prominent, on a sudden burst wide open, and

appeared very red and full of terror. After this, he was taken out of bed, and put breast high, into water blood warm, in which situation he appeared calm for about ten minutes, when he again cried, but not so strong as before. Being taken out of the bath, (where the friction was still kept up with the hand) wiped dry, and put again into a warm bed, he was soon after perceived to breathe, though very quick and feeble. Having in some degree recovered his senses, he spoke a few words imperfectly; but his speech soon became more perfect; and having swallowed a trifling potion his father administered to him, he complained of great pain in his stomach and bowels, which was soon relieved by an embrocation, volatile, oily, and anodyne. The next night he got rest by the help of a cordial anodyne; but it was a fortnight before he wholly recovered.

We have been particular in stating the above facts, from an idea that the knowledge of them may prove useful in similar accidents, and indeed in all cases of suspended animation.

## XXVII.

DOCTOR TISSOT mentions an instance of a girl who was restored to life, after she had been taken out of the water, swelled, bloated, and to all appearance dead, by laying her naked body upon hot ashes, covering her with others equally hot, putting a bonnet round her head, and a stocking round her neck, stuffed with the same, and heaping coverings over all. After she had remained half an hour in this situation, her pulse returned, she recovered her speech, and cried out, *I freeze, I freeze*; a little cherry brandy was given her, and she remained buried, as it were, under the ashes for eight hours. Afterwards she was taken out, without any other complaint, except that of lassitude or weariness, which went off in a few days. The Doctor mentions likewise an instance of a man who was restored to life, after he had remained six hours under water, by the heat of a dung-hill.



## XXVIII.

DOCTOR ALEXANDER mentions an instance of a man, who was to all appearance killed by a blow on the breast, but recovered on being immersed for some time in warm water. These, and many other instances of a similar nature, amount to a full proof of this fact, that many of those unhappy persons who lose their lives, by falls, blows, and other accidents, might be saved *by the use of proper means duly persisted in.*



## XXIX.

MR. TOSSACH, Surgeon at Alloa, relates the case of a man suffocated by the steam of burning coal, who he recovered by blowing his breath into the patient's mouth, bleeding him in the arm, and causing him to be well rubbed and tossed about.

And Doctor Frewen, of Sussex, mentions the case of a young man who was stupified by the smoke of sea coal, but was recovered by being plunged into cold water, and afterwards laid in a warm bed.

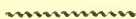


### XXX.

Even in old age, when life seems to have been gradually drawing to a close, the appearances of death are often fallacious.

A LADY in Cornwall, more than eighty years of age, who had been a considerable time declining, took to her bed, and in a few days seemingly expired in the morning. As she had often desired not to be buried till she had been two days dead, her request was to have been regularly complied with by her relations. All that saw her looked upon her as dead, and the report was current through the whole place; nay, a gentleman of the town actually wrote to his friend in the island of Scilly, that she was

deceased. But one of those who were paying the last kind office of humanity to her remains, perceived some warmth about the middle of the back ; and acquainting her friends with it, they applied a mirror to her mouth ; but, after repeated trials, could not observe it in the least stained ; her under jaw was likewise fallen, as the common phrase is ; and, in short, she had the appearance of a dead person. All this time she had not been stripped or dressed ; but the windows were opened as is usual in the chambers of the deceased. In the evening the heat seemed to increase, and at length she was perceived to breathe.

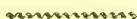


## XXXI.

MONSIEUR JANIN, of the Royal College of Surgery at Paris, relates, that a Nurse having had the misfortune to overlay a child, he was called in, and found the infant without any signs of life ; no pulsation in the arteries, no respiration, the face livid, the eyes open, dull,

and tarnished, the nose full of snivel, the mouth gaping, in short, it was almost cold. Whilst some linen clothes and a parcel of ashes were warming, he had the boy unswathed, and laid him in a warm bed, and on the right side. He was there rubbed all over with fine linen, for fear of fretting his tender and delicate skin. As soon as the ashes had received their due degree of heat, Mr. Janin buried him in them, except the face, placed him on the side opposite to that on which he had been at first laid, and covered him with a blanket. He had a bottle of *Eau de luce* in his pocket, which he presented to his nose from time to time; and between whiles some puffs of tobacco were blown up his nostrils: to these succeeded the blowing into his mouth, and squeezing tight his nose. Animal heat began thus to be excited gradually: the pulsations of the temporal artery were soon felt, the breathing became more frequent and free, and the eyes closed and opened alternately. At length the child fetched some cries expressive of his want of the breast, which being applied to his mouth, he caught at it with avidity, and sucked, as if nothing had happened

to him. Though the pulsations of the arteries were by this time very well re-established, and it was hot weather, yet Monsieur Janin thought it adviseable to leave his little patient three quarters of an hour longer under the ashes. He was afterwards taken out, cleaned and dressed as usual; to which a gentle sleep succeeded, and he continued perfectly well.



## XXXII.

MR. Glover, Surgeon in Doctor's Commons, London, relates the case of a person who was restored to life after twenty nine minutes hanging, and continued in good health for many years after.

The principal means used to restore this man to life were opening the temporal artery and the external jugular; rubbing the back, mouth, and neck, with a quantity of volatile spirits and oil; administering the tobacco clyster by means of lighted pipes, and strong fric-

tions of the legs and arms. This course had been continued for about four hours, when an incision was made into the wind pipe, and air blown strongly through a canula into the lungs. About twenty minutes after this the blood at the artery began to run down the face, and a slow pulse was just perceptible at the wrist. The frictions were continued for some time longer; his pulse became more frequent, and his mouth and nose being irritated with spirit of salammoniac, he opened his eyes. Warm cordials were then administered to him, and in two days he was so well as to be able to walk eight miles.



### XXXIII.

IN the parish of St. Clements in Colchester, a child of six months old, lying upon its mother's lap, having had the breast, was seized with a strong convulsion fit, which lasted so long, and ended with so total a privation of motion in the body, lungs, and pulse, that it

was deemed absolutely dead. It was accordingly stripped, laid out, the passing bell, ordered to be tolled, and a coffin to be made; but a neighbouring gentlewoman who used to admire the child, hearing of its sudden death, hastened to the house, and upon examining the child, found it not cold, its joints limber, and fancied that a glass she held to its mouth and nose was a little damped with the breath; upon which, she took the child in her lap, sat down before the fire, rubbed it, and kept it in gentle agitation. In a quarter of an hour she felt the heart begin to beat faintly; she then put a little of the mother's milk into its mouth, continued to rub its palms and soles; found the child begin to move, and the milk was swallowed; and in another quarter of an hour, she had the satisfaction of restoring to its disconsolate mother the babe quite recovered, eager to lay hold of the breast, and able to suck again. The child throve, had no more fits, is grown up, and at present alive, i. e. 1803.

These means, which are certainly in the power of every person, were sufficient to restore

to life an infant to all appearance dead, and who in all probability, but for the use of these simple endeavours would have remained so. There are however, many other things which might be done in case the above should not succeed; as rubbing the body with strong spirits, covering it with warm ashes or salt, blowing air into the lungs, throwing up warm stimulating clysters, or the smoke of tobacco into the intestines, and such like.

When children are dead born, or expire soon after the birth, the same means ought to be used for their recovery, as if they had expired in circumstances similar to those mentioned above.

These directions may likewise be extended to adults, attention being always paid to the age and other circumstances.



The foregoing cases and observations afford sufficient proof of the success which may attend the endeavours of persons totally ignorant of medicine, in assisting those who are suddenly



deprived of life by any accident or disease. Many facts of a similar nature might be adduced, were it necessary, but these, it is hoped, will be sufficient to call up the attention of the public, and to excite the humane and benevolent to exert their utmost endeavour for the preservation of their fellow creatures.

In short, not only the ordinary signs are very uncertain, but we may say the same of the stiffness of the limbs, which may be convulsive; of the dilation of the pupil of the eye, which may proceed from the same cause; of putrefaction, which may equally attack some parts of a living body, and of several others. Haller, convinced of the uncertainty of all these signs, proposes a new one, which he considers as infallible.—“If the person (says he) be still in life, the mouth will immediately shut of itself, because the contraction of the muscles of the jaw will awaken their irritability.” The jaw however, may be deprived of its irritability though a man may not be dead. Life is preserved a long time in the passage of the intestines. The sign pointed out by Dr.

Fothergill appears to deserve more attention.—

“If the air blown into the mouth, (says this physician) passes freely through all the alimentary channels, it affords a strong presumption, that the irritability of the internal sphincters is destroyed, and consequently that life is at an end.”

—These signs, which deserve to be confirmed by new experiments, are doubtless not known to Undertakers.

The difficulty of distinguishing a person apparently dead from one who is really so, has, in all countries where bodies have been interred too precipitately, rendered it necessary for the law to assist humanity. Of several regulations made on this subject, we shall quote only a few of the most recent; such as those of Arras, in 1772; of Mantua, in 1774; of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, in 1775; of the Senuhausée of Sivrai, in Poitore, in 1777; and of the Parliament of Metz in the same year. To give an idea of the rest, it will be sufficient to relate only that of Tuscany. By this edict, the Grand Duke forbids the precipitate interment of persons who dies suddenly. He orders the

magistrates of health to be informed, that physicians and surgeons may examine the body; that they may use every endeavour to recal it to life, if possible, or to discover the cause of its death; and that they shall make a report of their procedure to a certain tribunal. On this occasion, the magistrate of health orders the dead not to be covered until the moment they are about to be buried, except so far as decency requires; observing always, that the body be not closely confined, and that nothing may compress the jugular veins and the carotid arteries. He forbids people to be interred according to the ancient method; and requires that the arms, and the hands, should be left extended, and that they should not be folded or placed cross-wise upon the breast. He forbids, above all, to press the jaws one against the other; or to fill the mouth and nostrils with cotton, or other stuffing. And lastly, he recommends not to cover the visage with any kind of cloth, until the body is deposited in its coffin.

We shall conclude this article by subjoining, from Dr. Hawes's *Address to the Public* on this subject, a few of the cases in which this fallacious appearance of death is most likely to happen, together with the respective modes of treatment which he recommends.

In apoplectic and fainting fits, and in those arising from any violent agitation of mind, and also when opium or spirituous liquors have been taken in too great a quantity, there is reason to believe that the appearance of death has been frequently mistaken for the reality. In these cases, the means recommended by the *Humane Society for the recovery of drowned persons*, should be persevered in for several hours; and bleeding, which in similar circumstances has sometimes proved pernicious, should be used with great caution. In the two latter instances, it will be highly expedient, with a view of counteracting the soporific effects of opium and spirits, to convey into the stomach, by a proper tube, a solution of tartar emetic, and by various other means, to excite vomiting.

From the number of children carried off by convulsions, and the certainty arising from undoubted facts, that some who have in appearance died from that cause have been recovered; there is the greatest reason for concluding, that many, in consequence of this disease, have been prematurely numbered among the dead; and that the fond parent, by neglecting the means of recalling life, has often been the guiltless executioner of her own offspring. To prevent the commission of such dreadful mistakes, no child, whose life has been apparently extinguished by convulsions, should be consigned to the grave, till the means of recovery above recommended in apoplexies, &c. have been tried; and, if possible, under the direction of some skilful practitioner of medicine, who may vary them as circumstances shall require.

When fevers arise in weak habits, or when the cure of them has been principally attempted by means of depletion, the consequent debility is often very great, and the patient sometimes, sinks into a state which bears so close an affinity to that of death, that there is reason to suspect

it has too often deceived the by-standers, and induced them to send for the undertaker, when they should have had recourse to medicine. In such cases, volatiles, *eau de luce* for example, should be applied to the nose, rubbed on the temples, and sprinkled often about the bed; hot flannels, moistened with a strong solution of camphorated spirit may likewise be applied over the breast, and renewed every quarter of an hour; and as soon as the patient is able to swallow, a tea spoonful of the strongest cordial should be given every five minutes.

The same methods may also be used with propriety, in the small pox, when the pustules sink, and death apparently ensues; and likewise in any other acute disease, when the vital functions are suspended from a similar cause.

# ACCOUNT

Of the various

## MODES OF BURYING THE DEAD,

*ADOPTED BY DIFFERENT NATIONS.*



THE primitive Christians buried their dead after the manner of the Jews. They first washed, then embalmed them, spending, (says Tertullian,) more perfumes, and aromatic gums, upon such occasions, than the heathens did in their sacrifices. They wrapt the corpse in fine linen, or silk, and sometimes put them on rich habits. They then laid them forth for the space of three days, during which they constantly attended the dead body, and passed the time in watching and praying by it. Then they carried it to the grave, with torches and flambeaus, singing psalms and hymns to the praise of God, and in testimony of their hopes

of the resurrection. They recommended the dead likewise in their prayers, received the communion, and made their *Agapæ*, or love feasts, with the distribution of other charities for the poor.

At the end of the year, they made a fresh commemoration for them, and so from year to year; beside the standing commemoration for the dead, always joined with the eucharist, they frequently put into the grave several things, as marks of honour to the deceased, or to preserve his memory; such as the badges of his dignity, the instruments and acts of his martyrdom, an epitaph, or at least his name: and sometimes they threw in medals, laurel leaves, some crosses, and the gospel. And whereas the heathens, built stately tombs for their dead, either by the sides of great roads, or in the open fields; the Christians, on the contrary, disposed of their deceased, either after the common way of interment, or laying them in vaults under ground; such were the catacombs near Rome.—They had anciently, a religious ambition to be buried near the



bodies of martyrs, and this is that which, at last, brought so many graves and tombs into the churches; which were frequently erected over the graves of martyrs: this was the occasion of burying in churches; for a long time it was the custom to bury the dead no where but without the walls of cities.

As to the old Greeks, after they had closed the eyes of the deceased, they used to make a great noise with a sort of bell, done as it is supposed either to scare away the furies and hobgoblins, or else to wake the person, in case he was only in a lethargy or apoplectic fit. Afterwards they put a piece of money into his mouth, to pay his passage over the Styx, giving him likewise a piece of meat to put Cerberus in good humour: they then put a bandage, or little scarf over his eyes, and his face was covered to his chin with cloth. This office was to be performed by the nearest relations, who were likewise obliged to wash the body with warm water and anoint it. This was properly the business of women. The corpse was likewise wrapt in fresh linen,

or new cloth, made into a sort of straight gown. The body was afterwards crowned with chaplets, to intimate the deceased had conquered the misfortunes of this life. They likewise put some sweetmeats into his mouth, which was part of the entertainment of the Olympionces. The funeral being thus far prepared, they placed the corpse at the gate of the house, which was a sort of laying in state.

The day after, before sun-rise, the Greeks used to carry the corpse to the funeral pile. The expence upon this occasion, though moderate at first, grew afterwards to a great excess; therefore Solon made a sumptuary law, to oblige the Athenians to frugality. The relations used to attend the corpse to the funeral pile; women under three score years of age, unless pretty near related, were not permitted to come into the house where the corpse lay; however all of that sex were allowed to accompany the body to the place of sepulchre: at the latter end of the solemnity the company had a treat at the expence

of the relations, at which time, if the deceased had done any thing remarkable, it was set forth in a speech; which privilege was afterwards granted to none but those who died in the field, for their country, or such as were buried at the charge of the state, which in such cases was done in the Ceramicus.

It was a custom among the Greeks, to bury persons of the best quality in raised grounds, till, at last, there were two public burying places appointed by the state, called *Ceramici*, one within, and the other without the wall. In the first of which, those who died in the field, were buried. If any person happened to die on their travels, or in another country, their way was to anoint the corpse with honey, to preserve it from putrefaction, till they could bring it home. And sometimes they wrapt them alive, in cerecloth for the same purpose.

The Egyptians of which we shall speak more fully hereafter, used to embalm their dead with a composition made of wine and

odoriferous drugs, such as myrrh, cinnamon, cedar, &c. This embalming was a whole month in finishing, it being necessary to repeat the aromatic gums under the corpse a great many times. Herodotus observes, that the Egyptians used to dress the corpse in the same habit that the person wore, and put it into a transparent glass coffin.

The Romans paid the last offices to the dead, in the following manner: after they had closed the eyes of the dead, they called out to him several times, to see if he was not fallen into a swoon, or lethargical distemper.—After this, they washed the corpse with warm water, and rubbed it with perfumes. This being done, they put a sort of white gown upon him, and brought him to the door with his feet to the street, then they stuck branches of cypress before the house.

This ceremony continued seven days, and upon the eighth they carried the corpse to the place where it was to be burnt: amongst people of fortune, the bier, or coffin, was

generally carried by relations: and at the funerals of Emperors and Consuls; the Senators, and Magistrates of the Republic did this office; but the common people were carried by Vespillones, or common bearers. When persons of high blood, or who were eminent for posts in government, or remarkable actions, were brought to the pile, the distinctions of their quality were carried before the coffin, as the consular fasces, the sword and mace, their ancestors in wax work, the plunder they had gained upon the enemy, the civic, mural, &c. crowns which they had deserved, and every thing else that might add to their figure. Servius observes, that in the beginning of the Republic, they buried their dead in their houses: but by a law of the twelve tables, it was forbidden either to bury, or burn any corpse within the city of Rome; but afterwards, the vestal virgins, and Emperors had a privilege of exception; as for other people they were either interred in the highways, or in their ground, out of the town. At the burning of the corpse, they laid it fast upon a

pile of wood, of pines, yew, and other resembling trees, which lay one upon another in the figure of an altar. The corpse being dressed, and sprinkled with rich liquors, lay in a coffin, made on purpose, with his face upwards, and a piece of silver in his mouth to pay Charon for his fare. The pile was surrounded with cypress, an embalm of grief and death; after this some of the nearest relations, turning their back to the pile, set fire to it with a torch, which they held behind them; and the fire being lighted, they threw in the clothes, arms, and other rich goods, which the deceased person had the greatest fancy for. When the corpse was burnt, they wetted the bones and the ashes with milk and wine, and then put them into an urn, which they buried in a sepulchre for that purpose. Before this urn, they set a little altar, where they burnt perfumes.

Their mourning lasted ten months, which was Romulus's year; but it was possible to shorten this term by some public success of the

state, or any extraordinary good fortune, which happened to a private family.



*Account of the opening of the Tomb of King Edward I. in Westminster Abbey, 467 years after its Interment.*

THE following interesting account of the effect produced by the mode of preservation, which, for many centuries, has been made use of upon the bodies of royal personages, will it is presumed, be found not unacceptable to our readers. It is extracted from Sir Joseph Ayloffe's account of the opening of the Tomb of Edward the First, in Westminster Abbey 467 years after its interment. After describing the manner of opening the tomb and coffin, which was done with the utmost care, in the presence of the Reverend Doctor Thomas, then Dean of Westminster, two of the prebends, and the President of the Antiquarian Society, the writer says,

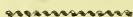
“On lifting up the lid, the royal corpse was found wrapped up within a large square mantle of strong, course, and thick linen cloth, diapered, of a dull, pale, yellowish brown colour, and waxed on its under side.”

The head and face were entirely covered with a sudarium, or face cloth, of crimson sarsenet, the substance whereof was so much perished, as to have a cobweb-like face, and the appearance of fine lint. The sudarium was formed into three folds. When the folds of the external wrapper were thrown back, and the sudarium removed, the corpse was discovered, richly habited, adorned with ensigns of royalty, and almost entire, notwithstanding the length of time that it had been entombed. Its innermost covering seemed to have been a very fine linen cerecloth, dressed close to every part of the body, and superinduced with such accuracy and exactness, that the fingers and thumbs of both the hands had each of them a separate and distinct envelope of that material. The face, which had a similar covering, closely fitted thereto, retained its exact form, although part



of the flesh appeared to be somewhat wasted. It was of a dark brown, or chocolate colour, approaching to black, as were the hands and fingers. The chin and lips were entire, but without any beard; and a sinking or dip, between the chin and underlip, was very conspicuous. Both the lips were prominent, the nose short, as if shrunk; but the apertures of the nostrils were visible. There was an unusual fall, or cavity, on that part of the bridge of the nose which separates the orbits of the eyes; and some globular substance, possibly the fleshy part of the eye-balls, was moveable in their sockets, under the envelope. Below the chin, and under jaw, was lodged a quantity of black dust, which had neither smell nor coherence; but, whether the same had been flesh or spices, could not be ascertained. One of the joints of the middle finger of the right hand was loose, but those of the left hand were quite perfect. The corpse, from the waist downward, was covered with a large piece of rich figured cloth of gold, which was loose over the lower part of the tunic, thighs, legs and feet, and tucked down behind the soles of the latter. There

did not remain any appearance of gloves; but, on the back of each hand, and just below the knuckle of the middle finger, lay a *quatre-soil*, of the same metal as those in the stole (i. e. of fillagree work, in metal gilt, elegantly chased in figure.) The feet, with their toes, soles, and heels, seemed to be perfectly entire; but, whether they have sandals on them, or not, is uncertain, as the cloth tucked over them was not removed. On measuring the body by a rod, quadrated into inches, divided into quarters, it appeared to be exactly six feet and two inches in length.



*The following remarkable fact is translated from the Imperial Gazette of Petersburg, dated December 17th, 1798.*

“ IN 1796, a coffin was found at the Convent of Sumovin, in the city of Trotma, in the eparchy of Volgoda, containing a corpse, in the habit of a Monk. It had been interred in 1568, yet was in a state of perfect preservation, as were also the garments. From the letters embroidered on them, it was found to be the

body of the most memorable Feodose Sumovin, founder and superior of the Convent, and who had been acknowledged as a saint during his life, for the miracles he had performed."

The Emperor Paul, on hearing this report caused the following proclamation to be issued.

"We Paul, &c. having been certified by a special report of the *most holy synod*, of the discovery that has been made in the Convent of Spasso Sumovia, of the miraculous remains of the most venerable Feodose, which miraculous remains distinguish themselves by the happy care of all those who have recourse to them with *entire confidence*, we take the discovery of these holy remains as a *visible sign*, that the Lord has cast his most gracious eye in the most *distinguished manner* on our reign. For this reason, we offer our fervent prayers and our gratitudes to the Supreme Dispenser of all things, and charge our *most holy synod* to announce this *memorable discovery* throughout all our empire, according to the forms prescribed by the *holy church*, and by the *holy fathers*, &c. the 28th, September 1798."

OBSERVATIONS  
ON THE  
DANGER OF BURYING IN CHURCHES  
AND  
*CONFINED CHURCH-YARDS.*

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IT is to be feared that the ancients had juster and more rational ideas, relative to the disposal of the dead, than the moderns seem in general to possess. The cometaryies in populous and crowded cities are, for the most part, not only offensive, but destructive, and engender diseases. Quiet, remote, and unfrequented places, if properly secured, are certainly the most suitable for the purposes of interment. The practice of burying in churches, or near them, has not the least foundation in holy writ; on the contrary, we know, that under the Mosaic dispensation, the bodies of the dead were considered as a pollution to the priest and the altar; and the custom which prevails at present, was introduced by the Romish clergy, who pretended that the defunct enjoyed great and peculiar privileges by having their remains deposited in consecrated ground.

The Germans have begun to remove the burying-place a mile or two from every city or town, by which means they have abolished, or paved the way towards abolishing, all the nonsensical epitaphs and laughable inscriptions, which generally abound in church-yards, and too often disgrace the memory they mean to celebrate; and have substituted for the offensive cemetery an agreeable kind of garden, more calculated to inspire calm devotions than sentiments of horror.

*Vide Render's Tour through Germany.*



IN the voyages and travels of Dr. Hasselquist, a Swedish physician, he observes, concerning burials in churches and towns: "The burying places of the Turks are handsome and agreeable, which is owing chiefly to the many fine plants that grow in them, and which they carefully place over their dead. The Turks are much more consistent than the Christians, when they bury their dead without the town, and plant over them such vegetables as by their aromatic smell can drive away the fatal odours

with which the air is filled in such places. I am persuaded that by this they escape many misfortunes which affect Christians from wandering and dwelling continually among the dead."

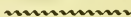


THE great Sir Matthew Hale was always very much against burying in churches, and used to say, "*that churches were for the living, and the church-yards for the dead.*" He himself was interred in the church-yard of Alderley, in Gloucestershire.

In Mold church, in Flintshire, is an epitaph on Dr. William Wynne, written by himself; in which are these words :

In conformity to an ancient usage,  
From a proper regard to decency,  
And a concern for the health  
of his fellow-creatures,

He was moved to give particular directions for being buried in the adjoining church-yard,  
" and not in the church."



IN 1776, The king of France prohibited the burying in churches.



“Two respectable correspondents,” observes a writer, in one of the early volumes of the *Monthly Magazine*, have very properly censured and exposed the indecency, and even danger, of burying in churches and in towns. In addition to their remarks and anecdotes, allow me a place, if you can, for an extract from a very scarce discourse, by that learned and eminently pious prelate, Joseph Hall, preached at Exeter, August the 24th, 1637, on the consecration of a new burial place. The text, which is very applicable, and admirably elucidated, is *Genesis*, the 23rd chapter, 19th and 20th verses.—“And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field Machpelah, before Mamre, the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan. And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure to Abraham for a possession of a burying place by the sons of Heth.”

After making several pertinent observations on the subject, the excellent Bishop says: “Hitherto that there must be a meet place,

a place fixed and designed for the burial of the dead; now let us a little look into the choice of the place; it was a field, and a cave in that field; a field not *sub-tecto*, but *sub-dio*; a field before Mamre, a city that took its name from the owner, Abraham's assistant in his war; before it, not in it; and indeed both these are fit and exemplary: it was the ancientest and best way that sepulchres should be without the gates of the city; hence you find that our Saviour met the bier of the widow's son as he was carried out of the gates of Nain to his burial; and hence of old was wont to be that proclamation of the Roman funerals, *allus cefertur feras*. And we find that Joseph of Arimathea, had his private burial place in his garden without the City, (for it was near to Calvary) and so was Lazarus, his sepulchre without Bethany. Our Saviour staid in the field, till the sisters came forth to him, and the neighbours came forth after them: so they went together to the sepulchre. And certainly much might be said to this purpose for the convenience of out funerals, without respect of those Jewish grounds, who held a kind of impurity in the



corpses of the dead ; but that which might be said, is rather out of matter of wholesomeness and civil considerations, than out of the grounds of theology. In time, this rite of burial, did so creep within the walls, that it insinuated itself into churches, yea, into the Holy of Holies,—Choirs, and chancels, near unto the holy table, God's evangelical altar ; but I must tell you, this custom hath found entertainment only in the Western churches, that is, those that were of correspondence with the Roman ; for the Greek church allows no such practice, and the Roman at first admitted it very sparingly, so as (*elim episcopi, et alii principes sēpeliebantur in ecclesia*) none but princes and bishops (as Martinus Vivaldus) were of old interred in churches ; afterwards the privileges grew larger, to other eminent benefactors into the church, and none but them : and now that it is grown so common, both in our churches and the Roman, we may thank partly superstition, partly ambition and covetousness ; superstition of them that think the holiness of the place doth not a little avail the soul ; ambition of those that love these (*πρὸς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν*) both

living and dead: covetousness of those greedy hucksters of the church of Rome, who upon the sale of their suffrages, raise the prices of their holy ground to their unreasonable advantages. But to speak freely, what I think concerning this so common practice, I must need say, I cannot but hold it very unfit and inconvenient, both, first in respect of the majesty, it is the Lord's House, the palace of the King of Heaven; and what prince would have his court made a charnel-house? How well soever we loved our deceased friends, yet when their life is dissolved, there is none of us but would be loath to have their corpses inmates with us in our houses; and why should we think fit to offer that to God's house which we should be loath to endure in our own.— Secondly, in regard of the annoyance of the the living; for the air (kept close within walls) arising from dead bodies, must needs be offensive, as we find by daily experience, more offensive now than of old to God's people: they buried with odours, the fragrancy whereof was a good antidote for this inconvenience; “(she did this to bury me,” saith our Saviour). Not so with us; so as the air receives no other

tincture than what arises from the evaporation of corrupted bodies. But though I approve not common buryings within the church, as not deeming that a fit bestowage for the dead ; yet forasmuch as the church is a place of most public resort and use, I cannot mislike that in some meet parts, whether floors, or pillars, or walls, (especially of the side chapels pertaining thereto) there be memorials or monuments of worthy and well deserving Christians, whereby their knowledge and precious remembrances may be perpetuated to posterity."

Thus far the worthy Bishop, on this indecent and unwholesome practice: to which I shall only add (observes the writer) a quotation from Mr. Strutt, who informs us, " that before the time of Christianity, it was held unlawful to bury the dead within the cities, but they used to carry them out into the fields hard by, and there deposit them. Towards the end of the sixth century, Augustine obtained of king Ethelbert, a temple of idols, (where the king used to worship before his conversion) and made a burying place of it; but St. Cuthbert

afterwards obtained leave to have *yards* made to the churches, proper for the reception of the dead."



AT a funeral in St. Mary's church, at *Montpellier*, a porter happened to tumble into the vault, where several corpses had been deposited; and, not returning again, his brother, who perceived that his candle had gone out, went down to help him up, but neither did he return, nor made the least outcry; a third did the like, without uttering a syllable; at length a fourth, perceiving they were all in the dark, ventured to be let down by a rope, with a light in his hand, to see what was the matter. This man finding himself attacked with a noisome vapour, when he was half way down, begged to be drawn up again, and upon being let blood, recovered. The other three were hawled out with hooks fixed to the ends of poles, having no remains of life. The sexton affirmed that something of the like nature had formerly happened in another vault. These dead men were in a manner covered over with a wet mud, whose stench was

such, that nobody cared to touch them. A few days after, (says Mr. de Sauvage, the writer of this account) I went to the place, and by a line let down cats of different ages, birds and dogs, about seven feet deep into the vault. The young cats died convuled, in about three minutes; the old ones in half a minute, or less. Lighted flambeaus went out before they were well under the surface of the ground, as though they had been dipped in water.

In order to examine (observes this gentleman) into the nature of this vapour, I drew some of it up from the bottom of the vault, in a glass bucket, as if it had been water; candles were extinguished, and birds suffocated in it in an instant. If any of it was conveyed into a phial, an exhalation issued out of the orifice, to which a candle being applied, it was not extinguished; but if introduced within the mouth, went out immediately. It was considerably heavier hant air, for if the phial was inclined, the vapour yielded to the position, and laid horizontally; and if the vapour was poured into another

phial, to whose bottom a bit of lighted wax candle was fixed, it put it out as soon as it arose as high as the flame. This vapour, after having been kept in phials, well stopped, for several months, retained its poisonous quality as strong as at first. Is not this a proof of the perniciousness of burying vaults in churches, and do not many popular diseases very probably arise from this filthy custom?

THE  
FATAL CONSEQUENCES

Of opening

*TOMBS OR GRAVES TOO SOON.*



THE people of Challons upon the Marne, in France, having resolved some years since, to enlarge the yard or square before their town house, by adding to it a part of St. Alpin's church-yard, and for that purpose, to remove all the bodies lately buried there, were diverted from the execution of their design, by a dissertation wrote by M. Navier, a physician and member of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, for shewing the dangerous consequences of opening graves before the bodies are quite dissolved; and as such practices are too frequent in this country, it may be of service to

lay before the public an abstract of what this celebrated physician has said upon the subject.

The doctor divides his dissertation into two parts, in the first of which he describes the several degrees of corruption which a dead body successively undergoes, and which bring it at last to a total dissolution. From these principles he concludes, that the terrible mixture which results from putrefaction, by raising itself in the form of infectious exhalations, may penetrate even to the inside of the tender and delicate organs of living bodies, and may infallibly occasion their destruction. These exhalations will convey themselves, more or less, into all those who happen to be within their atmosphere; and our fluids being once impregnated with these virulent particles, cannot, without difficulty, disentangle themselves, so that notwithstanding the redoubled efforts of nature, to free itself from the grasp of such a formidable enemy, multitudes must succumb. The misfortune resulting from hence, may not confine itself to that short space of time, during



which the air continues infected; for a part of these corrupting impurities which have passed themselves into living bodies, may continue there for a long time, and may be communicated to others, or may lie concealed, even for a considerable time, before they begin to exert their virulence.

This poison, the doctor observes, may convey itself into living bodies by more ways than one; for example, through the pores of the skin, along with the breath we draw, along with our food of any kind, &c. And to prove that dead bodies must lie a long time buried, in order to give time to the corrupted particles with which the surrounding earth is impregnated, to dissipate themselves, or to be entirely converted into the first elements of matter, he mentions, first, an interment of several bodies in a church-yard of Challons, in the year 1724, which, though they had been four years under ground, were nevertheless very far from being near consumed, and which still emitted such an infectious stench, that the people could hardly bear it, notwithstanding the great quantity of

incense they kept burning. Secondly, he mentions the report of several grave-diggers, all of whom declared, from experience, that it was dangerous to open tombs in less than four years; and that, by moisture or rain, dead bodies were kept from being consumed. And, Thirdly, he mentions a fact, of which he himself was a witness. A grave-digger, in digging a grave, shewed him the skeletons of three bodies which had been buried one above another, every one of which had some of the hair and some of the entrails remaining, and something of a fleshy substance upon the bones, though the lowermost had been twenty, the second eleven, and the third eight years underground.

In the second part, the doctor proposes the methods he thinks most proper for guarding those who are exposed to the bad air of interments, from this almost inevitable contagion. He advises the putting them off as long as possible, as being the most certain: but when extreme necessity will admit of no delay, he proposes these precautions: The first, and most

essential, consists in making a number of small trenches in the church-yard, then filling them with unslacked lime, and taking care to pour upon it a large quantity of water; for the water being impregnated with the ignious, and absorbing particles of the lime, penetrates the earth, and the remains of the interred bodies, and thereby destroys, in whole, or in part, the corrupting impurities. This operation he advises to renew, more or less, often, in proportion to the number and condition of the bodies buried in the ground. The second precaution is, to chuse for the removal the coldest time of the year, and when the north winds prevail most; and the third, is to make great fires round the church-yard, to fire cannon, or some other instrument charged with fulminating powder, at least three or four times a day. These last methods, says he, have the property of correcting, and effectually destroying the putrid exhalations with which the air may still remain impregnated, and of accelerating the currents of air, &c.

The custom of burying in churches, and of depositing the bones of dead bodies in charnel houses, gives M. Navier occasion to make observations upon this two fold abuse; and in a second dissertation, which is a sort of appendix to the first, he, with great reason, declares against burying in churches, which is too frequently permitted under the specious pretext of raising thereby a revenue for the support of the fabrick. He observes, that this custom of burying in churches was never allowed before the ninth century; and that ever since it has been allowed, it has, from time to time, produced unfortunate consequences; several of which he relates, both ancient and modern, that have happened at Chalons, at Montpelier, at Paris, and in foreign countries. As the earth which is thrown up by digging new graves, is impregnated with a great quantity of corrupt particles, conveyed into it, by the bodies before interred therein. It is not at all surprising, says he, that such unlucky effects should ensue; for if the bodies of dead animals left in the open air, often occasion contagious diseases, though the free air to

which they are exposed is continually carrying off, and, as it were, sweeping away those putrid impurities which arise from dead bodies, by degrees, as they become corrupted, what have we not to fear from churches where great numbers of people are interred? It is these poisoned particles, he adds, with which the earth is impregnated, that has caused the death of great numbers of grave diggers, even upon their opening ground where no vestige of any dead body was to be found; and it is for this reason, that they are generally obliged to dig a grave at several intervals; for if you ask them why, they will tell you, that they feel themselves, as it were suffocated; if they continue at it for any long time; and their breathing in these infected vapours, is what makes such men generally but short lived.

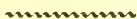
According to M. Navier, the most effectual remedy for this abuse, would be, not to permit any, or but very few persons to be buried in churches; and when it is allowed, to slack a large quantity of lime upon the body, there being no more certain method for destroying

it speedily, and as one may say, before it can pass through any one degree of corruption.

But, as in spite of all these precautions, the air in churches may often be a little vitiated, M. Navier, proposes a very easy method for restoring it to its natural purity, which, is to take out, in the day time, some of the upper panes of the glass windows, near the vaults; which little openings cannot render the church too cold, and at the same time will make a free communication between the external and internal air.

And as to charnel houses, he tells us, that he has often visited them in the several places where he has happened to reside, and that among the bones he has always found some that had still a sort of corrupted fleshy substance upon them. Ought not, says he, such an abuse to be prevented: ought it not to be forbid under pain of exemplary punishment, to expose the bones of dead bodies to the open air, which must always be corrupted by their unwholesome exhalations, even when they have

nothing of this fleshy substance upon them; for we cannot be too watchful in preserving the air in its utmost purity, since upon it depends the life, and health of man. Therefore he concludes, that all charnel houses ought to be suppressed, as they appear to him to be more hurtful than useful; and that all grave-diggers ought to be strictly enjoined to collect carefully all the bones thrown up in digging a grave, in order to be again thrown into it, and well covered with earth.



*Further corroboration of the aforesaid  
subject.*

IN the month of September, 1784, a poor woman died in the Hospital at Aberdeen, and was buried in a church yard in the neighbourhood. A company of young Surgeons, agreed with the grave digger, to set some mark on the grave, as a direction for them to find the body for anatomical purposes; but some person in

order to disappoint the grave digger's employers, moved the signal to another grave, that of a woman who had been buried about three or four months. The party came, and directed by the mark agreed upon, dug up the grave, drew out the coffin, and carried it home. But upon opening it, a vapour like flame of brimstone came forth, and suffocated them in an instant. Two women also going past the room, fell down dead, and it was said, that eleven persons thus perished from the baneful effluvia.

It is very common, observes Doctor Buchan, in this country, to have church-yards in the middle of populous cities. Whether this be the effect of ancient superstition, or owing to the increase of such towns, is a matter of no consequence. Whatever gave rise to the custom, it is a bad one. It is habit alone which reconciles us to these things; by means of which the most ridiculous, nay pernicious customs, often become sacred. Certain it is, that thousands of putrid carcases, so near the surface of the earth, in a place where the air



is confined, cannot fail to taint it; and that such air when breathed into the lungs, must occasion diseases.

In most Eastern countries it was customary to bury the dead at some distance from any town. As this practice obtained sanction among the Jews, the Greeks, and also the Romans, it is strange that the Western parts of Europe should not have followed their example in a custom so truly laudable.

Burying in churches is still more detestable. The air in churches is seldom good, and the effluvia from putrid carcases must render it still worse. Churches are commonly old buildings with arched roofs. They are seldom open above once a week, are never ventilated by fires, nor open windows, and rarely kept clean. This occasions that damp, musty, unwholesome smell which one feels upon entering a church, and renders it a very unsafe place for the weak and valetudinary. These inconveniences might in a great mea-

sure, be obviated, by prohibiting all persons from burying within churches, by keeping them clean, and permitting a stream of fresh air to pass frequently through them, by opening opposite doors and windows.

The practice of burying the dead, says the doctor, in the centre of populous neighbourhoods, is still too generally continued. Churches and church-yards are made the chief places of interment, in direct opposition to reason, and to the example of the most enlightened people of antiquity. The first words of the old Roman inscriptions on tomb stones, "*Siste viator,*" Stop, traveller, shew that the dead were buried by the side of public roads, not in temples, nor in the heart of towns and cities. One of the laws of the late Joseph II. relative to this point, will do him immortal honour. After strictly prohibiting the interment of dead bodies in any church or chapel. "It is horrid," says the Emperor, "that a place of worship, a temple of the Supreme Being, should be converted into a pest-house for living creatures! a person who, upon his death-bed, makes it a condition

of his will to be buried in a church or chapel, acts like a madman : he ought to set his fellow-creatures a good example, and not to do all in his power to destroy their constitutions, by exposing them to the effluvia arising from a corpse in a state of putrefaction."

The admirable sentiment expressed by one of our own country-women, who died a few years since, afford a striking contrast with the superstitious folly so justly stigmatized by the Emperor.

This extraordinary female, whose mind was superior to the weakness of her sex, and to the prejudices of custom, being fully sensible, as she herself expressed it in her last will, "that the bodies of the dead might be offensive to the living," ordered her body to be burnt, and the ashes deposited in an urn, in the burying ground of St. Georges, Hanover-Square, where the remains of the sentimental Yorrick, are also interred.



To prevent the dreadful contagion in future, that might otherwise arise from thoughtless and wicked people, prematurely stealing dead bodies from their graves, the following easy method of securing the same, is strongly recommended as an effectual preventative.

As soon as the corpse is deposited, let a truss of long wheaten straw be opened, and distributed in the grave in layers, as equally as may be, with every layer of earth, till the whole is filled up. By this method the corpse will be effectually secured, as may be found by experience; for it is certain that the longest night will not afford time sufficient to empty the grave, though all the common implements of grave-digging be made use of for the abominable purpose.

ACCOUNT  
OF  
REMARKABLE TOMBS,  
AND EVER-BURNING  
LAMPS OF THE ANCIENTS.



*Among the papers of Dr. Parsons, in the Bodleian Library, is the following very extraordinary story. It is dated 1685.*

IN a piece of ground within two miles of Cirencester, in the county of Gloucester, commonly known by the name of Colton's Field, as two labourers were digging a gravel pit at the foot of a hill, which they had now sunk four yards deep, they observed the ground on that side next the hill to be loose, and presently discovered an entrance into the belly

of the hill, which appearing very strange to them, and rather the work of art than nature, one of them ventured a little way in, and by the light from the hole, discovered a large cavity; whereupon they got a lanthorn and candle to make a further search into it. By the advantage of this light, the first place they entered, appeared to have been a hall, which was large, and in it two tables with benches on each side, which they no sooner touched, to feel their substance, but they crumbled into dust. From thence they saw a passage into another room, which, by the furniture, had been a kitchen. Several utensils proper to it, as pots, kettles, &c. being of brass or iron, continued somewhat firm, but eaten through with rust and canker.

Beyond the hall, they went into a parlour furnished, according to the fashion of those times, with carpets richly wrought, and other furniture agreeable: these also fell to pieces upon their touching them. At one corner of the room, there appeared to have been a pair of stairs; but the earth had fallen in, and

stopt the ascent. Going back into the hall, they observed another opening, which led them into a square room, ornamented with carved work in several parts, supposed to have been a place of worship and devotion, by images in the wall; and at the upper end of it, they found several urns, some of which had only ashes in them, others were filled with coins and medals, of gold, silver, and brass, with Latin inscriptions, and heads of several Roman Emperors.

As they went searching about this room, they spied a door, which had been strongly patched with iron, but the wood being rotten, with a little force it fell in pieces; and looking in, to their great astonishment, they saw the image of a man in full proportion, with a truncheon in his hand, and a light, in a glass like a lamp, burning before him. This very much affrightened them at first, imagining it to be a devil in that shape, or a guardian spirit set there to defend some hidden treasure; the hopes whereof so far encouraged them at last, that one of them ventured a step in, but upon

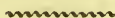
his first descent, the image seemed to strike at him; at which they were both so terrified, that they durst proceed no further; but went back, and taking many of the medals and coins with them, out of the urns, at night acquainted a gentleman, who is a famous antiquary, with the discovery they had made, what they had seen, and the money they had found; shewing him several pieces; upon which he ordered them to keep the matter private; promising to go with them the next morning, which he accordingly did.

After he had viewed the other rooms with wonder and delight, they conducted him to the place where the image was, which he supposed might, by some great artist, be made to strike at certain times; therefore without any apprehension of danger, went in; and, as before, upon his first step, the image made an offer to strike; so at the second step, but with a greater force: at the third step, it struck a violent blow on the glass, where the light was, which broke it in pieces, and quite extinguished it (the light) that, had they not been furnished



with a lanthorn and candle, their condition would have been desperate. The image appeared to have been the effigy of some Roman General, by those ensigns of martial honour which lay at his feet. On the left hand lay two heads embalmed. The flesh was shrivelled up, and looked like parchment scorched, of a dark complexion. They had long hair on the chin; one seemed to be red, and the other black.

Upon further search were found several other passages leading to other houses, or different rooms of the same house; but a hollow voice, like a deep sigh or groan, prevented any other discovery. Our adventurers hastily quitted those dark apartments, which they had no sooner done, than the hill sunk down, and buried all the rarities, except those medals and coins taken out the night before, which are now shewn for the satisfaction of the curious and ingenious, who in great numbers flock to see them, and purchase them at great rates, as most valuable relics of antiquity.



KOMMANUS tells us, that in Valentia, a city of Spain, there was found the body of Adonizam, the servant of King Solomon, together with his epitaph in Hebrew. It appeared, that he had laid buried above two thousand years, yet was he found uncorrupted: so excellent a way of embalming the dead were those skilled in, who lived in the Eastern Countries.

He also mentions the body of Cleopatra, which had remained undamaged for an hundred and twenty-five Olympiads, viz. five hundred years, as appears by the letter of Heraclius the Emperor to Sophocles the philosopher.

I remember not, continues Kommanus, to have read any thing like this amongst the Romans, unless of the body, as some say of Tulliolæ, the daughter of Cicero, which was found entire and uncorrupted (as some have

computed) one thousand and five hundred years, the particulars of which are described as follows from Houghton's collections, volume the 2nd, page 346.

In the papacy of Paul the Third, in the Appian way, where abundance of the chief Heathens of old were laid, a sepulchre was opened; where was found the entire body of a fair virgin swimming in a wonderful juice which kept it from putrefaction so well, that the face seemed no way damnified, but lively and handsome. Her hairs were yellow, tied up artificially, and kept together with a golden circle or ring. Under her feet burnt lamps, which vanished at the opening of the Sepulchre. By some inscriptions it seems she had lain 1500 years. Who she was is not known, although many thought her to be *Tulliolæ*, the daughter of Cicero.

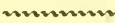


CEDRENUŠ makes mention of a lamp, which (together with an image of Christ) was found at Edessa, in the reign of Justinian the Emperor. It was set over a certain gate there, and privily enclosed, as appeared by the date of it, soon after Christ was crucified: it was found burning (as it had done for five hundred years before) by the soldiers of Cosroes, king of Persia, by whom also the oil was taken out and cast into the fire; which occasioned such a plague, as brought death upon almost all the forces of Cosroes.

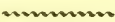


AT the demolition of our monasteries here in England, there was found in the supposed monument of Constantius Chlorus (father to the great Constantine,) a burning lamp which was thought to have continued burning there ever since his burial, which is about three hundred years after Christ. The ancient

Romans used in that manner to preserve lights in their Sepulchres a long time, by the oil of gold, resolved by art into a liquid substance.



BAPTISTA PORTA, in his treatise on Natural Magic, relates, that about the year 1550, in the island Nesis in Naples, a marble sepulchre, of a certain Roman was discovered, upon the opening of which, a phial was found containing a burning lamp. This lamp became extinct on breaking the phial, and exposing the light to the open air. It appeared that this lamp had been concealed before the advent of Christ. Those who saw the lamp reported, that it emitted a most splendid flame.



THE most celebrated lamp of Pallas, the son of Evander, who was killed by Turnis, as Virgil relates in the tenth book of his *Æneid*, was discovered not far from Rome, in the year 1401, by a countryman, who digging

deeper than usual, observed a stone sepulchre, containing the body of a man of extraordinary size, which was as entire as if recently interred, and which had a large wound in the breast. Above the head of the deceased, there was found a lamp burning with perpetual fire, which neither wind nor water, nor any other superinduced liquor could extinguish: but the lamp being bored at the bottom, and broke by the importunate enemies of this wonderful light, the flame immediately vanished. That this was the body of Pallas, is evident from the inscription on the tomb, which was as follows :

Pallas, Evander's son, whom Turnis' spear  
In battle slew, of mighty bulk, lies here.



A VERY remarkable lamp was discovered about the year 1500, near Atestes, a town belonging to Padua, in Italy, by a rustic, who digging deeper than usual, found an earthen

urn, containing another urn, in which last, was a lamp placed between two cylindrical vessels, one of gold, and the other of silver, and each of which was full of a very pure liquor, by whose virtue it is probable, the lamp had continued to shine for upwards of 1500 years, and, unless it had been exposed to the air, might have continued its wonderful light for a still greater period of time. This curious lamp was the workmanship of one Maximus Olybius, who most probably effected this wonder, by a profound skill in the chymical art. On the greater, urn, some verses were inscribed in Latin, which may be translated as follows:

## 1.

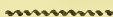
Plund'rers, forbear this gift to touch,  
'Tis awful Pluto's own :  
A secret rare the world conceals,  
To such as you unknown.

## 2.

Olybius in this slender vase  
The elements has chain'd;  
Digested with laborious art,  
From secret science gain'd.

## 3.

With guardian care two copious urns  
The costly juice confine,  
Lest, thro' the ruins of decay,  
The lamp should cease to shine.



On the lesser urn were the following verses.

Plund'rers with prying eyes, away!  
What mean ye by this curious stay?  
Hence with your cunning, patron god,  
With bonnet wing'd, and magic rod!  
Sacred alone to Pluto's name,  
This mighty work of endless fame.



~~~~~

SAINT AUSTIN mentions a lamp that was found in a temple, dedicated to Venus, which was always exposed to the open weather, and could never be consumed or extinguished. And Ludovicus Vives, his commentator, mentions another lamp which was found a little before his time, that had continued burning for one thousand and fifty years.

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It is supposed, that the perpetuity of these lamps, was owing to the consummate tenacity of the unctuous matter with which the flame was united, being so proportioned to the strength of the fire, that, like the radical moisture and natural heat in animals, neither of them could conquer or destroy the other. Licetus, who is of this opinion, observes, that in order to preserve this equality of proportion, the ancients hid these lamps in caverns, or close monuments: and hence it has happened, that on opening these tombs, the admission of fresh air to the lamps

has produced so great an inequality between the flame and the oil, that they have been presently extinguished.



Mr. Addison in his Spectator, relates the following story of the lamp of Rosicrucius.

“ A certain person having occasion to dig somewhat deep in the ground, where the philosopher Rosicrucius lay interred, met with a small door, having a wall on each side of it. His curiosity, and the hopes of finding some hidden treasure, soon prompted him to force open the door. He was immediately surprised by a sudden blaze of light, and discovered a very fair vault: at the upper end of it was a statue of a man in armour, sitting by a table, and leaning on his left arm. He held a truncheon in his right hand, and had a lamp burning before him. The man had no sooner set one foot within the vault, than the statue erected itself from its leaning posture, stood

bolt upright, and upon the fellow's advancing another step, lifted up the truncheon in his right hand. The man still ventured a third step, when the statue with a furious blow broke the lamp into a thousand pieces, and left his guest in a sudden darkness."

Upon the report of this adventure, the country people soon came with lights to the sepulchre, and discovered that the statue, which was made of Brass, was nothing more than a piece of clock work; that the floor of the vault was all loose, and underlaid with several springs, which, upon any man's entering, naturally produced that which had happened.

Rosicrucius, say his disciples, made use of this method, to shew the world that he had re-invented the ever-burning lamps of the Ancients, tho' he was resolved no one should reap any advantage from the discovery.*

* Note.—Mr. Addison seems to have borrowed this story from the one related by Dr. Parsons. Vide p. 121.

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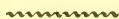
IN the tenth year of Henry II. at the digging of a new foundation in the church of St. Mary-Hill, in London, there was found and taken up the body of Alice Hackney, she had been buried in that church a hundred and seventy-five years before, yet was she there found whole of skin, and the joints of her arms pliable ; her corpse was kept above ground four days without any inconvenience, exposed to the view of as many as would behold it, and then re-committed to the earth.

*Baker's Chronicle.*

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IN the reign of King James, at Astley in Warwickshire, upon the fall of the church, there was taken up the corpse of Thomas Grey, Marquis of Dorset, who was there buried the 10th of October, 1530, in the twenty second year of King Henry VIII, and although

it had been lain seventy eight years, in this bed of corruption, yet his eyes, hair, flesh, nails, and joints, remained as if he had been but newly buried.



IN the year 1554, there was found in Rome a coffin of marble, eight feet long, and in it a robe, embroidered with Goldsmith's work, which yielded six and thirty pounds weight of gold; besides forty rings, a cluster of emeralds, a little mouse, made of another precious stone, and amongst all these precious magnificences, two leg bones of a dead corpse, known by the inscription of the tomb to be the bones of the Empress Mary, daughter of Stilicoe, and wife of the Emperor Honorius.



ROBERT BRAYBROOK, born at a village in Northamptonshire, was consecrated Bishop of London, January, 5th, 1381. He was after that Chancellor of England for six months.

He died, anno. 1404, and was buried under a marble stone, in the chapel of St. Mary, in the Cathedral of St. Paul's, London. Yet was the body of this Bishop lately taken up, and found firm, as to skin, hair, joints, nails, &c. For upon that fierce and fatal fire in London, September, 2nd, 1666, which burnt so much of St. Paul's church, when part of the floor fell into St. Faith's, this dead person was shaken out of his dormitory, where he had lain no less than two hundred and sixty two years. His body was exposed to the view of of all sorts of people for divers days; and some thousands did behold and poise it in their arms, till by special order it was re-interred.

Fuller's Worthies.



IN the Reign of King Henry II. anno, 1089, the bones of King Arthur, and his wife Guenevor were found in the vale of Avalon, under an hollow oak, fifteen feet under

ground, the hair of the said Guenevor being then whole and fresh, of a yellow colour; but as soon as it was touched, it fell to powder, as Fabian relateth: this was more than six hundred years after his death. His shin bone, set by the leg of a tall man, reached above his knee the breadth of three fingers.

Baker's Chronicle.



THE body of Albertus Magnus was taken out of his sepulchre, to be re-interred in the midst of the chancel in a new tomb for that purpose, it was two hundred years from the time wherein he had been first buried; yet was he found entire without any kind of deformation, unless it was this (says a celebrated historian) that his jaw seemed to be somewhat fallen.



MR. BRYDONE in his travels, speaking of a Sicilian Convent, says, the famous convent of Capuchins, about a mile without the city of Palermo, contains nothing very remarkable but the burial place, which is indeed a great curiosity. This is a vast subterraneous apartment, divided into large commodious galleries, the walls on each side of which are hollowed out into a variety of niches, as if intended for a great collection of statues. These niches, instead of statues, are filled with dead bodies set upright upon their legs, and fixed by the back to the inside of the niche. Their number is about three hundred. They are all dressed in the clothes they usually wore, and form a most respectful and venerable assembly. The skin and muscles, by a certain preparation, become as dry and hard as a piece of stock fish: and although many of them have been here upwards of two hundred and fifty years, yet none are reduced to skeletons. The muscles indeed, in some, appear to be a good deal

more shrunk in some than in others ; probably because these persons had been more extenuated at the time of their death. Here the people of Palermo pay daily visits to their deceased friends, and recall with pleasure and regret, the scenes of their past life. Here they familiarize themselves with their future state, and choose the company they would wish to keep in the other world. It is a common thing to make choice of their niche, and to try if the body fits it, that no alterations may be necessary after they are dead ; and sometimes by way of a voluntary penance, they accustom themselves to stand for hours in these niches. The bodies of the princes and first nobility, are lodged in handsome chests, or trunks ; some of them richly adorned. These are not in the shape of coffins, but all of one width, and about a foot and a half or two feet deep. The keys are kept by the nearest relations of the family, who sometimes come and drop a tear over their departed friends. Some of the Capuchins sleep in these galleries every night, and pretend to have many won-

derful visions and revelations; but the truth is, that very few people believe them.



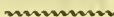
IN the philosophical transactions, we find the following account of a body found in a vault, in the church of Staverton, in Devonshire, by Mr. Tripe, Surgeon at Ashburton, in a letter to Doctor Huxham, dated June, 28th, 1750. There having been a great diversity of reports, says the writer, relating to a body lately discovered in a vault in Staverton church, I have taken the liberty of communicating to you the following particulars. As it does not appear by the register of the burials, that any person has been deposited in this vault since October, 5th, 1669, it is certain that the body has lain there upwards of four score years; yet, when the vault was opened, about four months ago, it was found as perfect in all its parts, as if but just interred. The whole body was plump and full, the skin white, soft, smooth,

and elastic; the hair strong, and the limbs nearly as flexible as when living.

A winding sheet, which was as firm as if just applied, enclosed it from head to foot, and two coarse cloths dipped in a blackish substance, like pitch, infolding the winding sheet. The body, thus protected, was placed in an oaken coffin, on which, as it was always covered with water, was found a large stone, and a log of wood, probably to keep it at the bottom.

Various have been the conjectures as to the cause of its preservation; and it has been reported, though probably without foundation, that the person was a Roman Catholic; there have been some of that religion, who not having philosophy enough to account for it from natural causes, have attributed it to a supernatural one, and canonized him: and, in consequence of this, have taken away several pieces of the winding sheet and pitch clothes, preserving them as relics with the greatest veneration.

In my opinion, says Mr. Tripe, the pitch clothes and water overthrow the miracle, and bring it within the power of natural agents; from the former by defending the body from the external air; and the latter by preserving the tenacity of the pitch.



IN the year 1448, in the ruins of an old wall of the beautiful church at Dunfermling in Scotland, there was found the body of a young man, in a coffin of lead, wrapped up in silk: it preserved the natural colour, and was not in the least manner corrupted; though it was believed to be the body of the son of King Malcolm the Third, by the Lady Margaret.



In the year 1764, the following interesting account appeared in an Italian paper.

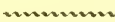
“ Letters from Rome say, that they have removed to the Clementinian College there, some antiquities which were discovered in a vineyard near the church de St. Cesair, situated on the Appian way, not far from the ruins of the baths of the Emperor Caracalla. The workmen who laboured in the vineyard, struck against a thick vault, which they broke through with great difficulty. In this vault they found four urns of white marble, adorned with bass-reliefs, the subject of which left no room to doubt of their being sepulchral urns. Under this vault they perceived another, which being broke through, discovered two magnificent oval basons, the one of a black colour, mixed with veins of the Lapis Calcedonius; its greatest diameter, was about six feet and a half, the least, three feet, and two feet

deep. This bason contained a human body. The second bason was of a greenish colour, of the same dimensions with the other, except its being but a foot and a half deep. This was covered with white marble, and contained the body of a woman very richly cloathed; but it was hardly opened, before the body and its attire fell wholly into powder; from which was recovered eight ounces of pure gold. In the same place was found a small statue of Pallas, in white marble; the work of which is highly esteemed."

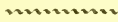


ALEXANDER GUAVNERIUS, speaking of the old and great city of Kiovia, near De Borysthenes, "There are," saith he, "certain subterraneous caverns extended to a great length and breadth within ground: here are divers ancient sepulchres, and the bodies of certain illustrious Russians; these, though they have lain there time out of mind, yet do they appear entire. There are the bodies of two princes in their

own country habits, as they used to walk when alive, and these are so fresh and whole, as if they had but newly lain there. They lie in a cave unburied, and by the Russian Monks are shewn to strangers.



SOME years since, at the repairs of the church of St. Cœcilia, beyond the river Tiber, there was found the body of a certain Cardinal, an Englishman, who had been buried there three hundred years before; yet was it every way entire, not the least part of it perished, as they report, who both saw and handled it.



At the time Constantine reigned with Irene his mother, there was found in an ancient sepulchre in Constantinople, a body with a plate of gold upon the breast of it,

and thereon thus engraven.—*In Christum credoqui ex Mariâ Virgine nescetor: O Sol, imperantibus Constantino & Irene interrem me videbus: that is, I believe in that Christ who shall be born of Mary a Virgin: O Sun thou shall see me again, when Constantine and Irene shall come to reign.*—When this inscription had been publicly read, the body was restored to the same place where it had been formerly buried.



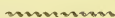
THE sepulchre of the great Cyrus, king of Persia, was violated in the days of Alexander the Great, in such a manner, that his bones were displaced and thrown out, and the urn of gold that was fixed in his coffin, when it could not be wholly pulled away, was broken off by parcels. When Alexander was informed hereof, he caused the Magi, who were intrusted with the care and keeping thereof, to be exposed unto tortures, to make them confess the authors of so great a violation and robbery: but they

denied with great constancy that they had any hand in it, or that they knew by whom it was done. Plutarch says, that it was one Polymachus, a noble Pellean, that was guilty of so great a crime. It is said, that the epitaph of this mighty monarch was to this purpose.

O mortal that comest hither (for come I know thou wilt) know that I am Cyrus the son of Cambyses, who settled the Persian Empire, and ruled over Asia, and therefore envy me not this little heap of earth, where-with my body is covered.



Not long since, at Bononiæ, in the church of St. Dominick, there was found the body of Alexander Tartagnus, a Lawyer at Imola, which was perfectly entire, and no way decayed, although it had lain there from his decease above one hundred and fifty years.



PAUSANIUS makes mention of a soldier, whose body was found with wounds fresh, and apparent upon it, although it had been buried sixty two Olympiads, that is no less than two hundred and forty eight years.

METHODS

OF

EMBALMING.



THE ancient Egyptians had three ways of embalming their dead, and artists were particularly trained up for that purpose: the most costly method was practised only upon persons of high rank, of which sort are all the mummies that have remained entire to the present times: it was done by extracting the brains through the nostrils, and injecting a rich balm in their stead, then opening the belly and taking out the intestines, the cavity was washed with palm wine impregnated with spices, and filled with myrrh and other aromatics; this done, the body was laid in nitre seventy days, at the end of which, it was

taken out, cleansed, and swathed with fine linen, gummed and ornamented with various hieroglyphics, expressive of the deceased's birth, character, and rank. This process completed, the embalmer carried home the body, where it was placed in a coffin, cut in human shape, and then enclosed in an outer case, and placed upright against the wall of the burying place belonging to the family.

Another less expensive method of embalming was, by injecting into all the cavities of the body, a certain dissolvent; which being suffered to run off after a proper time, carried with it whatever was contained therein liquified; and then the body, thus purged, being dried by the nitrous process as before, the operation was closed by swathing, &c. By the third and lowest method of embalming, which was only in use among the poor, they drenched the body with injections, and then dried it with nitre.

The Egyptians had a custom among them of pledging the dead bodies of their parents

and kindred, as a security for the payment of their debts, and whoever neglected to redeem them was held in the utmost abhorrence, and denied the rights of burial themselves.

They paid extravagant honours to their deceased ancestors: and there are at this day to be seen in Egypt pompous subterranean edifices, called by the Greeks Hypogees, representing towns or habitations under ground, in which there are streets or passages of communication from one to another, that the dead might have as free intercourse as when alive.

FINIS.

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